

## PERSONALITY AND LIFE

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*A Practical Guide to Personality Improvement*

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PERSONALITY AND LIFE

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SINCERELY DEDICATED TO THOSE WHO HAVE  
THROUGH CONCERTED AND INTELLIGENT  
EFFORT, CARVED OUT VIRILE  
SOCIALIZED PERSONALITIES

## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This volume represents the outgrowth of a long standing desire on the part of the author to present in non technical language the essential principles of sound personality development. There are, of course, many things about this intriguing question that are not known to either psychologists or laymen. Nevertheless, there are a number of important mental hygiene principles available that have been denied the average citizen and the younger college student for the simple reason that these principles have been presented either in such technical terms as to be unintelligible or in such popular phraseology as to be superficial.

The foundations of personality building are rooted in a comprehensive understanding of human nature as it operates in everyday life. No treatise that fails to provide the reader with a broad grasp of the nature of basic human motives can hope to provide him with more than a collection of devices designed to help him get by. The author has endeavored in this volume to present a non academic yet substantial treatment of the psychological principles involved in a fundamentally sound program of improvement in both personality and social adjustment. We choose to include matters pertaining to character development because of our belief that a truly wholesome personality is characterized by a desire to behave in accordance with the better dictates of society.

We make no apology for basing our program of personality building upon a socially constructive philosophy of life. One must accept some criterion of ultimate value and we choose to cast our lot with a philosophy that accepts as its irreducible minimum those standards of behavior which the more intelligent members of the race have found essential to orderly living. There is much evidence that this is the logical avenue to the stabilization of man and society.

So our book is not addressed to scholars. It is written directly for intelligent persons who are interested in personality as it affects the everyday conduct of life. It is addressed to the younger college students who are eager to understand their own natures as well as how to avoid the pitfalls of psychological dis

orders. We offer it to these individuals as a practical guide to constructive, socialized personality building. It is not merely a book on how to be popular. It is a volume devoted to those basic principles of living which, if followed, bring legitimate popularity and other forms of personality adjustment as a matter of course.

It is suggested that *Personality and Life* might well be used as a second semester text in personality development to follow the introductory course in general psychology. Such a year course in psychology for freshmen or sophomores should make a substantial contribution to the lower division student's personal equipment, whether he goes on to higher educational levels or contents himself with junior college.

The book is also offered as a textbook for non technical mental hygiene courses as given in four year liberal arts colleges. It is especially adapted to the needs of instructors who prefer material focusing on the everyday adjustment problems of young people who are relatively normal. Its pages are not unduly filled with descriptions of undesirable personality symptoms and defects. The emphasis is not alone upon insight into the processes of human nature but also upon a constructive program of action designed to enable the student to find his way out of personality and social maladjustments.

The book should prove useful as well to junior college and high school teachers and counselors who endeavor to guide students in harmony with the sound principles of mental hygiene known to psychology today.

The materials and case studies presented are based upon a number of years of teaching at both junior college and university levels, as well as upon experience in the field of clinical psychology. Practically all of the case studies are taken from the author's own files. The reader should realize that close contact with a large number of concrete cases of personality disorder provides a view of the requirements of human nature that is likely to differ somewhat from that held by the more academic psychologist.

Acknowledgment of the important contributions of other students of personality and mental hygiene are made throughout the volume. For these and other contributions that could be mentioned the author is grateful. Without them it would have

been impossible to formulate the principles upon which most of the writing is based

A number of psychologists assisted generously in preparing the manuscript for publication. Various chapters were read and constructively criticized by Dr Margaret E Bennett of the Pasadena Junior College, Dr William B Fuller of Occidental College, and Violet H Hess of the Long Beach Junior College. Many of the suggestions offered by these experienced instructors were incorporated.

Most of all the author is indebted to Mr Jay N Holliday of the Reedley Junior College, who assisted him in gearing the material of the book to the level desired. Mr Holliday wrote Chapter III and the final section of Chapter IX. In addition, he tried out the manuscript, while in typewritten form, in junior college classes with a view to incorporating useful suggestions from students. Mrs Holliday typed the entire manuscript and in other ways assisted in preparing the material for presentation. To all these the author wishes to express his appreciation.

LOUIS P THORPE

*Los Angeles California*

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER

## PAGE

- |     |   |    |
|-----|---|----|
| I   | WHO HAS A GOOD PERSONALITY ?                        | I  |
| I   | What Do We Mean by Personality ?                    |    |
| II  | What Is the Nature of Human Nature ?                |    |
| III | Why Must We Balance Our Motives ?                   |    |
| IV  | What Do Psychoanalysts Say about<br>Personality ?   |    |
| V   | What Does Good Personality Mean to Society ?        |    |
| II  | IS THE ADJUSTED LIFE DETERMINED BY REASON ?         | 25 |
| I   | Is Reason Our Guide to Behavior ?                   |    |
| II  | What Avenue Leads to the Adjusted Life ?            |    |
| III | Where Do We Get Our Attitudes Toward<br>Life ?      |    |
| IV  | What Changes Do Social Demands Make in<br>Us ?      |    |
| V   | Is There Reason in the Progress of Mankind ?        |    |
| III | WHEN ARE WE EMOTIONALLY MATURE ?                    | 49 |
| I   | What Causes Emotional Immaturity ?                  |    |
| II  | How Important Is Emotional Maturity ?               |    |
| III | How May Emotional Imbalance Affect<br>Success ?     |    |
| IV  | In What Way May Infantilisms Endanger<br>Marriage ? |    |
| V   | How May Emotional Maturity Be Attained ?            |    |
| IV  | PSYCHOLOGICAL DRUGS                                 | 71 |
| I   | What Life Demands Set Up Stress ?                   |    |
| II  | How Are Stresses Often Relieved ?                   |    |
| III | Should We Use Psychological Drugs ?                 |    |
| IV  | What Are Doubtful Ways of Drugging Our<br>selves ?  |    |



V. How Can We Dispense with Psychological Drugs?

V. WHAT ABOUT INTROVERSION? . . . . . 99

I. Who Are the Introverts?

II. What Makes an Introvert?

III. What Is Wrong with an Introvert?

IV. What Should We Do about Introversion?

V. Must We All Be Extroverts?

VI. CARVING OUT A PERSONALITY . . . . . 123

I. How Can One Carve Out a Personality?

II. What Are the Qualities That We Want?

III. What Skills Lead to Personality Improvement?

IV. What Can Working at Extroversion Do for Us?

V. How Do We Know Our Plan Will Work?

VII. HOW CAN WE BECOME AS OTHERS LIKE US? . . . 153

I. What Is the Psychological Basis of Human Relations?

II. What Does Psychology Say about Dealing with People?

III. What Sure Avenues Exist to Sound Popularity?

IV. How Does Liking People Contribute to Personality?

V. How Can Psychological Oil Ease the Social Machinery?

VIII. PATCHING BROKEN PERSONALITIES . . . . . 177

I. What Relation Exists between Psychiatry and Scientific Psychology?

II. What Does Psychology Tell Us about Nervous Disorders?

III. What Can Psychology Do about Nervous Disorders?

IV. What Methods Does Psychology Use in Correcting Disorders?

V. What Is the Future of Psychological Service?

IX. THE VALUE OF A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE . . . . . 211

I. What Is Meant by Pragmatism?

II. Is Pragmatism a Satisfactory Plan?

III. Is Religion More Than Morals and Ethics?

IV. What May "Functional" Religion Do for Personality?

V. How May We Maintain Personality Integration?

X. PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIETY . . . . . 233

I. Looking Toward the Future—What Do We See?

II. What Developments Are Detrimental to Social Welfare?

III. What Psychological Proposals May Help Stabilize Society?

IV. What Is Mankind's Capacity for Improvement?

V. Is There a Psychological Foundation for Social Planning?

AUTHOR INDEX . . . . . 261

SUBJECT INDEX . . . . . 263

## I. WHO HAS A GOOD PERSONALITY?

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What is personality? Can we show what human nature is like and how it operates to keep us in balance with ourselves and in harmony with our surroundings? Is it possible to determine who has a good personality?

The subtle elements which produce personality are not easily discernible, but careful research has revealed many basic characteristics of a good personality which casual observation had failed to discover. The reader, however, who wishes to understand and apply this knowledge must realize that he will meet many new ideas that make demands on his knowledge. If he gains clear insight into the introductory facts, the material that follows should be highly meaningful and practical.

To simplify the problem definite issues are discussed in each chapter. First we shall attempt to answer the following vital questions :

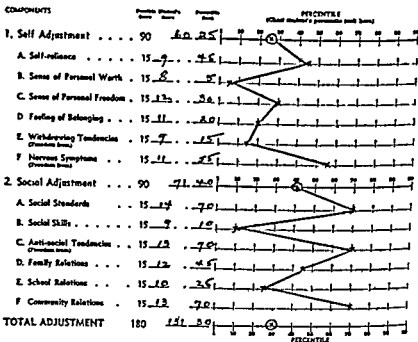
- I. What Do We Mean by Personality?
  - II. What Is the Nature of Human Nature?
  - III. Why Must We Balance Our Motives?
  - IV. What Do Psychoanalysts Say about Personality?
  - V. What Does Good Personality Mean to Society?
-

# CALIFORNIA TEST OF PERSONALITY—SECONDARY, FORM A

A PROFILE OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT

Devised by Ernest W. Torge, W. W. Clark, and Louis P. Thorpe

Name Helen Smith Grade 11-F  
 School Lincoln High Age 17 Last Birthday May 14  
 Teacher Miss Brown Date May 19, 1935 Sex M-F



The above profile of Helen Smith reveals that she is located at the 25 percentile in self-adjustment. This means that she surpasses about one-fourth and is surpassed by three-fourths of the students on whom the percentile norms of this test are based. Her social adjustment is slightly below average.

Helen appears to have an adequate knowledge of social standards and is reasonably well adjusted in family and community relationships. She is also relatively free from anti-social tendencies and from nervous symptoms which might have indicated emotional conflicts. But she is decidedly lacking in social skills and in adjustment in school relationships. She is also very low in her sense of personal worth and feeling of belonging and has a serious tendency to withdraw from reality and to secure personal satisfactions through the substitution of fantasies for successes in real life. The profile as a whole suggests decided lack of success in attaining security and favorable recognition, particularly in school situations. Special attention to the development of social skills and provision of opportunity for success might remedy a situation which could lead to more serious difficulties.

# PERSONALITY AND LIFE

## I WHO HAS A GOOD PERSONALITY?

### I WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PERSONALITY?

Individual success is so often ascribed to personality that its extreme importance is universally recognized. It is difficult, however, to realize how the deeper human nature aspects of personality work to our advantage or disadvantage. It seems appropriate to begin by developing as satisfactory an idea as possible of what is meant by the term personality.

#### *Personality as a Mystic Inner Self*

Ask a number of your friends to define personality. Some of the meanings they ascribe to the word will be mystic, some popular, and some technical. Those who hold to a mystic explanation ascribe personality to some undefinable inner self which unifies the experiences of life. Few who have had occasion to study the matter thoroughly agree with this casual viewpoint.

#### *Personality as Social Effectiveness*

The popular way of looking at personality makes it appear real to the layman who probably judges an individual's personality from his ability to influence other people effectively. This is the version popularized by Dr. Henry C. Link and others who rate personality by the extent to which an individual has learned "to convert his energies into habits or actions which successfully influence other people."

#### *The Nature of Personality Traits*

Psychologists often refer to a given personality as being largely extroverted, dominant, self-sufficient, emotionally stable, or a combination of these temperaments. Each of these terms is a name for an organized cluster of social actions.

We can compare traits to a cluster of grapes in which most of the individual grapes may be ripe and sweet with only a few

being sour Or we might find a cluster in which nearly all the grapes are sour with only a small number that are edible

The effect of early experiences is always such as to cause the development of some given combination of social habits. If these habits develop into clusters (traits) that make for generous actions and interest in other people, we say that the resulting personality is extroverted and emotionally stable. Such a personality is usually what is called well-adjusted, although it will not necessarily be self-directive and dominant to a high extent. The latter trait clusters may develop somewhat independently. Marked introversion and emotional instability usually appear together when an individual from his earliest days has been surrounded by unfavorable influences. A person of this sort may develop self-centeredness, seclusiveness, sensitiveness, poor sportsmanship, and the like.

Traits like extroversion and emotional stability are not complete blocks in personality, entirely present or absent. They are collections of tendencies to act in given ways in certain situations. These traits stand for groupings of definite social abilities or their absence, and thus indicate that personality can be modified by changing certain of these abilities along right lines.

This view of personality has the advantage of providing a concrete groundwork for practical programs of improvement. It removes the air of mystery and defines the elements of personality as actual social skills. Best of all, it suggests the possibility that all of us may, by systematic effort, bring our social abilities up to the point where we are well-adjusted to other people. That personality can be acquired is a thrilling thought to most people, that it has been acquired by many is a known fact. Ways of bringing about personality improvement, as well as obstacles to such a desirable outcome, will be suggested as we progress with our discussion.

### *Personality as a Pattern of Traits*

Despite the merit of the social effectiveness conception of the nature of personality, it is not inclusive enough. When we evaluate carefully the personality of an individual, we must include his personal appearance, his intelligence, his character, his various ways of solving his life problems and his social abilities. We can therefore regard personality as an elaborate pattern or

*combination of all of a person's characteristics* In this sense a man's personality has come to be what it is as a result of the life-long interplay of his basic nature with environmental forces

With this approach to an understanding of personality we would consider not only an individual's social effectiveness but also his inner adjustment with himself The effects that the actions of others have upon him are taken into account We also take notice of a man's respect for our common laws, ideals, customs and social regulations Consideration is given to his family adjustments, his capacity for friendships, his attitude toward the welfare of the race, and his ways of finding satisfaction for his need of personal success and recognition

We are also interested in knowing about a man's all around development, how he satisfies his life's motives, to what extent he maintains his moral integrity, and how he copes with feelings of guilt and inferiority We include as well to what extent he has been able to avoid nervous symptoms, how well he likes people, how far he will go in sacrificing for others to what degree he will follow convictions of right and wrong and how inwardly contented he feels about the way he is ordering his life

This broad view of personality is usually called the *organismic* view because it recognizes personality as a combination or pattern of all the traits and responses of the human individual as an organism It involves a more complete picture of man's development than the social efficiency approach Social efficiency is an extremely important part of man's total equipment, but there are other factors that must be given consideration in a thorough program of personality building Those who neglect these factors in favor of a more limited social scheme of personality development are unknowingly distorting the true facts of human nature and jeopardizing individual happiness

### *The Relation of Intelligence to Personality*

Intelligence has been mentioned as one of the aspects of personality By intelligence we mean principally the capacity for learning for applying what has been learned and for making appropriate adjustments to life's problems Personality is more than merely getting along with people and being able to get desired responses from them

It would seem reasonable to predict that those who make high

intelligence test scores would rate high in personality, but psychologists have found little relation between personality traits and high intelligence quotients (I.Q.'s). This means that highly intelligent individuals may or may not have effective personalities. They may achieve little success in a world like ours where so much depends upon social graces and diplomatic ability. Actually, in the wrong kind of school or home, it has been found that children may even decline in personality qualities while gaining in scholastic ability. Personality growth is possible only when knowledge is sincerely applied in daily living. The temperamental, moral, and social aspects of personality are just as important as those of a more purely intellectual nature. It has been demonstrated that there is as high a relationship between good personality and success in life as there is between degree of intelligence and later all-around achievement.

## II. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF HUMAN NATURE?

### *The Inadequacy of Success Books*

Many "success" books are published by business men and practical observers. They deal with techniques for influencing people, for improving personality, and for overcoming all sorts of handicaps. Very few of the writers are academically trained and clinically experienced workers. Hence such books often fail to take into consideration the deeper elements in human nature so necessary to any real and permanent improvement.

Although little is known with scientific finality about the fundamental behavior tendencies of human nature, yet we do have today at our command enough knowledge to enable men and women to understand themselves and their fellows much better than heretofore. This information offers new insight into the improvement and control of human tendencies. We propose to forget the "success" book methods, which so often offer only a set of manners for each occasion, and to attempt to study human nature as a whole.

### *Pre-scientific Notions of Human Nature*

Pre-scientific notions of human nature were usually expressed in terms of vague, inherited traits or tendencies. It was customary to account for all sorts of human tendencies, whether



good or bad, on the widely accepted belief that they were inborn.

It was universally agreed that children were born in a state of moral depravity which nothing could change. It was assumed that the child is naturally inclined toward bad behavior. Hence training should consist of a systematic program of vigorous discipline, constant repression, and severe punishment.

Is it any wonder that the French writer, Rousseau, rebelled against this morbid view and advocated the opposite but equally extreme view that when the child came from the hand of his Maker he was essentially pure and innocent and remained so until contaminated by the influence of civilized people? According to one belief man was naturally inclined toward evil until sufficient discipline made him civilized. On the other hand, Rousseau thought the child was pure until he acquired the cultures of civilized man.

### *Fallacies in Views on Human Nature*

The psychologist cannot logically subscribe to the view that human nature is either wholly evil or entirely virtuous. Although he recognizes that there are certain conquests of his own nature that man must make, these are of a much more complex character than was formerly supposed. Only by scientific methods can we hope to push back the barriers of ignorance and get at an understanding of the intricacies of human personality.

To say that traits are instinctive is another way of saying that human nature is inherited. We know that nearly all the forms of behavior formerly considered inherited have now been shown to be *learned*. We refer to such common responses as fighting, mating, self preservation, fleeing from danger, collecting, hoarding, and the like. Some actions begin to appear, of course, when bodily structures reach maturity. To attempt to account for all human actions by reference to instinctive tendencies would serve, however, merely to push a mystery further back. They are no more explanatory of the real motives of behavior than was the equally outmoded notion of innate sinfulness. Individuals admittedly do things that are recognized as wrong and that might in theological terms be called sin, but these actions are neither instinctive nor inherited. Such a theory passed away with the pricking of the old bubble of belief in inherited knowledge, instincts, and moral depravity.

### *The Concept of Fundamental Needs*

Individuals do, however, tend strongly to behave in certain ways, frequently undesirable, in preference to others. Even young children are not wax plates upon whom we can make whatever impressions we like. It is easy to get children to change some of their ways but often strong tendencies are met that we can hardly control. We cannot influence the child to suit our every wish. This is so because he has certain fundamental needs or motives *which must be reasonably well satisfied if he is to maintain his physical and psychological integrity in a world of problems.* As we shall see, there are a variety of these irreducible needs and all of them call loudly for recognition. Efforts to satisfy them account for much or all of man's (including the growing child's) constant activity. It is to satisfy these driving needs that we all strive. The stress that these unsatisfied needs set up in the personality explains much of what is called good and bad behavior. And we should like to emphasize again that where there are unfulfilled needs in the human organism, there will automatically be internal stresses and strains. Efforts to get rid of these stresses motivate our activities.

*Human nature at its source is a matter of ceaseless effort to satisfy inner stresses set up by man's basic needs.* The directions these efforts will take are determined by the opportunities and thwartings present in the individual's physical and social environment. When his needs are satisfied he will do what he recognizes as being right and proper. Under more severe thwarting circumstances, such as extreme hunger or cold, he may behave in ways that we regard as bad. But exclusive of moral considerations—and the young child does not understand moral issues—the individual is always seeking to keep himself in a state of balance. He is trying to gain at least a minimum satisfaction of his legitimate needs

### *The Basic Needs or Motives of Man*

What are these basic needs? What needs set up the strong tendencies to behave in certain ways that we recognize as expressions of human nature?

These questions also lead us to ask whether the normal indi-

vidual recognizes his need for these various satisfactions. The need is recognized but it is through training only that one can make a wise choice in satisfying what would otherwise seem to him blind urges. Yet man's life happiness is dependent upon a reasonably well balanced realization of his needs.

According to psychological observations and clinical studies, the basic needs which characterize all of us and which provide the motive for our actions are as follows \*

(1) *The need to maintain and further our physical well being by satisfying the stresses set up by hunger, thirst, excessive heat or cold, physical pain, fatigue, and the like.* Man clearly recognizes these needs and is constantly and consciously active in his efforts to satisfy them. Men, women, and children expend almost ceaseless effort to maintain their bodily welfare.

(2) *The need for personal recognition, self expression, realization of personal ambitions, and of being regarded as an individual of worth.* This is the universally recognized tendency of man to seek distinction and individuality. In other words, it is the self or ego motive. This driving motive is probably not inherited but is, at least by all mentally normal children, soon acquired or learned. While some may not recognize the strength and importance of this need for personality security, all the behavior of normal persons is powerfully influenced by the stress this need sets up. The personality becomes unadjusted when one is too severely thwarted in his efforts to secure reasonable ego satisfaction. Man cannot live without recognition and response from others. As we shall see more and more clearly, the ego or self motive drives individuals to countless efforts to appear well. It impels them to make an impression, to be sought after, to gain publicity, to cover up inconsistencies, and to win the plaudits of others.

(3) *The need to nurture and care for other members of society by offering them recognition, sympathy, and generous service.* This social motive is best served in connection with the home and its protection, its intimate love, and the rearing of children. It may and should find further expression in the various vocations and professions as well as in generous behavior toward

\* Cf. V. E. Fisher, *Auto-Correctivism: The Psychology of Nervousness*. The Caxton Printers, 1937, Chap. 3.

the human race in general. Unfortunately, many do not recognize this important racial or social motive. It is, nevertheless, essential to happiness and personality integrity, to mental health and social growth. This motive has been to a great extent overlooked, in spite of the great emphasis given it in religious teachings and in the personal lives of the heroes of the ages. Its importance has been amply demonstrated in our better societies, and in the writings of persons gifted with unusual insight into the processes of human nature.

### *Importance of Balanced Satisfaction of Needs*

As far as we know, then, these are the basic needs of man whether he recognizes them as such or not. *A balanced satisfaction or expression of all of these needs is essential to what we commonly call good personality.* It is human nature to seek satisfaction of bodily and ego recognition needs. To realize such satisfaction to a temperate extent is clearly good and right. In deed, to fail to do so sometimes leads to mental and physical disorders. But for reasons that we shall attempt to explain in the next section it is common practice to neglect the generous service need. One should contribute to the welfare of other members of the race. Failure to do this leads to psychological imbalance. To contribute to the needs of others excessively, to the neglect of reasonable satisfaction of personal needs, may also result in psychological disturbances. This situation indicates the complexity of human nature. It explains as well why human nature was formerly regarded as being perverse.

In short, *human nature is a name for the tendency of all of us to seek to satisfy the inner stresses that automatically arise when our basic needs are not being met.* In a complex and frequently thwarting civilization like ours, the achievement of such a balance is anything but simple. This view of human nature is very different from the one advanced by the old theory of moral depravity. According to the innate sinfulness theory, man is naturally bad and has to be reformed by gradual but severe methods. On our adjustment basis man is a morally neutral individual and is characterized by complex needs that must be reasonably well met in a well balanced way if he is to maintain his personal integrity and avoid the ravages of poor adjustment and psychological disorders.

## III WHY MUST WE BALANCE OUR MOTIVES?

The best proof that there must be a proper balance among human motives or needs in order to insure both the happiness of individuals and the welfare of society is probably found in the experience of the reader. If he will recall individuals who do little but concentrate on one need, he will find much unhappiness among them. We know, for example, how unpopular and unhappy the person becomes who spends much of his energy satisfying physical needs. Miser, gourmand, glutton, and rake are all words which express disapproval of some excessive form of this type of behavior. We also know that the desire for recognition when not properly realized leads to egotism and many bizarre ways of attracting attention by stunts and even crime.

The need for extending generous action is so little realized that it is difficult to offer an example where excess has caused maladjustment, but we can all recall people who have received recognition and who have the means to satisfy their physical needs but who are nevertheless unhappy. Such individuals have failed to recognize the fact that man lives in a social world and that he must contribute to life around him.

A study of the actions of people thus indicates that those who have been able to develop a satisfactory balance between their egoistic and social (selfless) motives are the ones who get along with the least friction. They are usually the ones who were fortunate enough to receive an appropriate home training that provided them with a feeling of personal security, gave them an adequate preparation in dealing effectively with people and thus enabled them to feel both successful and socially acceptable. Such people are adjusted to the requirements of their own natures as well as to the demands of the environment around them. On the contrary, individuals who have by unfortunate circumstances been denied this feeling of personal worth and this ability to get along with people often indulge in all sorts of deceitful, anti social and self-exalting antics. These undesirable traits which psychologists call attempted adjustment forms of behavior when carried to excess lead to unpopularity and personal unhappiness.

### *The Causes of Nervous Disorders*

A number of psychologists have concluded from their clinical studies that nervousness and even worse afflictions may result from continued failure to work out a satisfactory blend of the egoistic and social motives. It is apparent that *no individual of normal intelligence can confine his interests to securing satisfaction of either the ego (self) or the selfless (social) motive and maintain a balanced personality*. That is to say, neither the man who ignores his personal need for achievement and recognition nor the individual who willingly neglects his social obligations can expect to enjoy a normal emotional life. It is from a failure to blend these complementary motives that many nervous ailments arise.

### *The Function of Nervous Symptoms*

Furthermore, psychologists have suggested the significant fact that *nervous symptoms are probably checks brought on by an unbalanced personality to keep it from going to even further lengths in its march toward an utter breakdown*. When such breakdown does occur, it may take the form of prostration, suicide, or even insanity. The nervous symptom is often a balancing device which the unhappy personality adopts in an effort to solve the problem of avoiding further imbalance. In this sense nervous symptoms such as fears, inferiority feelings, and nervous illnesses, serve a useful purpose. But such disorders represent extreme measures which might readily have been avoided if the individual concerned had been able previously to adopt a balanced style of life, that is, if he had lived a pattern of life in which egoistic motives and generous social impulses had been blended in a balanced program of living.

In the life of the well-adjusted person, both the normal desire for self recognition and the need for extending assistance to his fellow men may find realization in such balance. This happy outcome may be seen in the case of the conscientious teacher who not only achieves distinction for herself but who serves her pupils unstintingly. In her life, egoism (self-security) and the more generous social motive are realized and blended in fine balance. She has met the basic requirements of her nature and thus reaps the reward of satisfactory adjustment.

*The Importance of Balanced Living*

It should be clear, therefore, that there is no evil in seeking a temperate and balanced outlet for the kind of self (ego) recognition that we have been describing. A man must nurture his own self respect and desire for success if he is to resist emotional disorders and achieve the kind of personality that can serve society well. On the other hand, man must give of his means and his energy to the nurture of less fortunate individuals who are in distress. If he persistently fails to blend self interest with recognition of social obligations he is likely to fall heir to the unhappy state of emotional imbalance that so often results from too marked disregard for the more selfless social motive.

The principle of balance as described seems in a way simple. Yet it is widely violated. It is even neglected by writers of popular books on how to get on in the world and make friends. The principal weakness in the teachings of these well meaning individuals is that they lead the reader to believe that all he has to do to be popular is to start being considerate of the other fellow, or perhaps, to perform those acts that are known to invite favorable responses. Actually, as most of us know, once an individual has become thoroughly self-centered, his psychological attitude toward this type of behavior is so strong that he finds it very difficult to enter upon a program of social living. A great deal must be done by way of changing his basic outlook on life before such an individual can even make a start toward performing acts of good will.

Most people do not realize that the self-centered neurotic (nervous patient) enjoys his condition more than he does an attempted generous action for others. He has developed his condition as a defense against further loss of the feeling of security. Having no one else in particular to cater to him, he revels in his own little world where he can find solace for his ego by pampering himself. Efforts to lead the neurotic out of himself frequently are futile, because, since he is largely devoid of friends and interests, the loss of his own self sympathy would force him back into the cruel world of relentless competition and distasteful social obligations.

In the case of moderately self-centered persons, the principle would be the same. But the resistance of the individual to social

influences would, of course, be less striking and baffling. This brief explanation should show us why an unpopular man or woman cannot always, upon reading a "success" book, proceed to use the suggestions given and become well adjusted. There is frequently more internal resistance to the suggestions given in the book than there is motive to perform them. Entrancing stories of strategy in handling people do not change deep-set psychological attitudes that have been developing over a period of many years.

### *Adjustment in the Animal World*

In searching for the possible cause of man's failure to keep himself in a state of psychological balance, we can perhaps do no better than observe the ways of animals. In the animal world we do not find personality disorders similar to those so commonly observed among human beings. This is probably because animals possess less of what we call self-consciousness, and they are consequently less capable of developing cases of self-or-ego-inflation. Although they seek for certain satisfactions, they do not work to advance themselves or to perpetuate their names for posterity. In short, animals have less definite ego-striving motives. Their behavior takes the form of satisfaction of bodily needs and attention to the racial welfare of their respective species. They give freely of their energy and of life itself when the welfare of their kind is at stake. When the simple amoeba reproduces itself it loses its identity completely. After the salmon spawns it gives up its life. When the male honey-bee completes the act of reproduction it dies. And we are all familiar with the heroic self-sacrifice of dogs, cats, wild animals, and fowls, even, when their young are attacked. Even the proud stallion and the ferocious bull protect their mates and forage for food in their behalf when required by circumstances to do so.

### *Man's Proclivity for Self-interest*

In the case of man we find a different story. Man is self-conscious and is gifted with a peculiarly marked capacity for catering to himself. Thus his biological or social motive, designed by nature to insure the perpetuation and nurture of the race, finds itself more or less outdistanced by its more egoistic rival. To his own partial destruction, man has discovered that



the burden of giving, sharing, and sacrificing is a grievous one. He has learned that by the simple expediency of refusing to shoulder this burden he can be free to enjoy self-centered satisfactions.

Thus, little by little, man has come to avoid the primary obligation of attention to his broad racial or social functions. With the coming of the many luxuries attendant upon the rise of our great machine age, man has given himself over more and more to self interests. The hundred and one ways in which all of us accomplish our egoistic purposes are familiar to everyone. Through it all we can observe the personality disorders that arise in the lives of those who indulge in egoistic pursuits to the exclusion of social motives.

Man is, thus, peculiarly susceptible to personality disorders. He does not seem to realize that his integrity, his happiness, and the stability of society depend upon his living a balanced life in which egoistic and social interests are nicely blended into a mutual pattern of living. True, there are broad limits within which individual programs of living may vary and still be what we designate as psychologically normal, but to a reasonable extent there must be a balanced blend of ego-satisfaction and expressions of selfless action.

### *Why Man's Nature Appears Evil*

The necessity of balancing our motives illustrates further the complexity of man's nature. It suggests why he finds it so easy to fail in character and personality building. This difficulty may be what theologians have in mind when they speak of man's tendency toward sin and evil, surely an unscientific and over simple explanation. The motive-balancing explanation does not necessarily constitute the final word in the matter, yet it takes into consideration more of the known facts of human nature. With no preconceived ideas it studies the many details of man's behavior with a view to understanding the biological and psychological needs that motivate his actions.

We may have here, too, a clue to what Dr. Alexis Carrel complains about so forcibly in his book *Man The Unknown*. According to him, man has unthinkingly fashioned a great industrial civilization to which his nature is not adapted. This civilization man cannot control and under its impact he is gradually

declining spiritually, morally, and intellectually All of which is said to be caused by the fact that man does not understand his own nature and is making very little headway toward doing so Of course, one's position in the matter of whether the race is declining depends upon his standards of value in the moral and so-called spiritual fields But we should like to suggest that possibly some tangible knowledge concerning the control of the psychological nature of man may be developing that is not so apparent to those who are primarily concerned with the biological sciences We say this in all earnestness, realizing that full knowledge of as complicated an object of study as the human personality must necessarily include the contributions of all the sciences Psychologists can offer only those additions to knowledge which their own researches and clinical observations make possible These may, however, be very valuable.

### *Characteristics of One sided Emphasis*

Just a word about both the psychologically trained and untrained who have recently published books devoted to the proposal that the hope of the individual and of society lies in a return to straight, unselfish, socialized living, that is to living comparable to the kind advocated for centuries in scriptural writings It is clear that the contributions made in these books are valuable. That the practice of their teachings in the lives of people in general would greatly improve society goes without saying Nevertheless, according to our analysis of the processes of human nature, most of these writings fall short of a full recognition of the problems involved in that they stress the more selfless socialized side of life almost exclusively True, many individuals have been so thoroughly self-centered most of their days that what they really need is experience in being respectful of others and conscious of their social obligations

There are people however, who have been so harshly treated and dominated from infancy in their efforts to make something of their own lives and ambitions that their primary needs for the present lie along the lines of self realization Furthermore there are some cases illustrating extreme egoism as merely a misguided reaction against years of enforced selfless living Imbalance can fall either way Each individual must be built up whenever possible along the exact lines of his imbalance Some indir-

viduals need satisfaction of the desire for legitimate personal recognition. Others must balance their personalities by attending to their obligations to society. But the great value of altruistic behavior in general must not be overlooked. And let us remember the important fact, not usually recognized by those who most need such insight, that generous acts, once they get started, bring in their wake the very recognition and genuinely warm response from others that a starved ego craves.

#### IV WHAT DO PSYCHOANALYSTS SAY ABOUT PERSONALITY?

People who are interested in keeping in touch with the various theories relating to personality disorders have sometimes wondered just what the psychoanalysts are trying to tell us. These people are concerned as well with the adequacy of psychoanalytic proposals to explain the motives of human nature. Perhaps a brief account of these systems will serve to point out contrasts with our balance-among motives proposal.

##### *Freud's Idea of Life Motives*

According to Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, the real driving motive in life is the desire for sexual gratification. But Freud uses the word sex in the broad pleasure or love sense of that term. During the child's infant days this craving finds adequate expression in such elementary life processes as sucking at the breast or bottle, sleeping and elimination. He also finds pleasurable satisfaction in thumb sucking, the caresses of his mother, and manipulation of the more sensitive areas of his body. This gives free scope to his 'libido' or life drive for sexual satisfactions. As the child grows older he soon learns that there are social regulations which place taboos on the free expression of these pleasures. Thus he develops a self-consciousness which tries to keep its face in relation with others while at the same time endeavoring to continue enjoyment of the sensual pleasures.

##### *How Conflict Arises in the Child*

Naturally, this dual effort sets up a conflict in the life of the child which at first tends to make for resistance to social demands. But many of these conflicts are said ultimately to lead to attempted repression of the erotic cravings. So it comes about

that the child is torn between conflicting desires for social approval and for sexual gratification, as general sensual pleasure or attachment to loved ones. Those who are in sufficient control of their repressed desires get along well except for occasional dreams and slips of the tongue; but the unfortunate man or woman who finds the gap between the ideals of social living and cravings for sensual pleasure too great to be reconciled, becomes the victim of nervousness, fantastic dreams, various forms of illness, pessimism, and other symptoms of conflict.

### *Psychoanalytic Escapes from Conflict*

As an escape from constant conflict between social regulations and suppressed desires, the individual is said to develop unconsciously a variety of adjustment processes that are designed to drain off his tensions. These include (1) *repression*, or the forcing into the unconscious of distressing thoughts and feelings; (2) *symbolization*, or dream symbols standing for tabooed cravings; (3) *rationalization*, or giving plausible excuses for irregularities in conduct; (4) *sublimation*, or the substitution of socially acceptable pleasures for the infantile sexual impulses; (5) *projection*, or self-justification through blaming others or obstacles and thus satisfying the ego, and (6) *conversion*, or the release of emotional tensions due to repressed impulses through the spread of sexual desires throughout parts of the body, as in hysteria.

How successful the ego and the super-ego (conscience) will ultimately be in controlling the restless activities of the unconscious means everything to the emerging personality. According to Freud, much depends upon the extent of erotic satisfaction enjoyed in infancy. The child who drew a bounteous mother should, as a result of gratification in feeding (coupled with successful weaning), tend to become optimistic and well poised. The child who was disappointed in nursing and other forms of satisfaction would be inclined to become nervous and pessimistic. This is the Freudian viewpoint on personality development.

### *Adler's Theory of the Inferiority Complex*

Alfred Adler's system of individual psychology suggests much the same idea of a conflict between opposite desires. According to him these are the demands of society and the suppressed mo-

tives of the unconscious. In this case the "libido," or life drive, is for power, for mastery over others. Naturally, disappointments are inevitable in such a quest, and as a result marked feelings of inferiority are said to spring up. These feelings lead to efforts at *compensation* (atoning for the deficiency) which may take either legitimate or anti-social direction. As examples of the former, Milton, though blind; Demosthenes, though a stutterer; and Beethoven, though partly deaf, strove successfully to excel in their respective areas of inferiority. Braggarts, bullies, and gangsters may be cited as examples of individuals who have compensated in unfortunate ways for their feelings of inferiority. The point is that all are striving for power and recognition. Their behavior must be interpreted in the light of how successful they have been in attaining such recognition.

The psychoanalytic doctrine advocated by C. G. Jung, another pupil of Freud, is not unlike Adler's, except to him the motivating force in life is the desire to make progress — the urge to get on in life. This urge is broader than sex and includes religion as well as artistic interests. Failure to get on in the struggle for existence may lead to infantile repression or the tendency to give up the life struggle in favor of the protections of childhood. Jung also emphasized the dual tendency of man to strive toward the good as well as toward the anti-moral.

### *Psychoanalysis and the Doctrine of Evil*

From this brief summary it is evident that psychoanalysts have their own notions as to what needs constitute the motives of human nature. They think in terms of driving appetites which soon get their possessors into trouble due to their conflicts with the ideals of society, but which persist enough in their endeavors to find satisfaction so that they influence behavior in many detailed ways. This doctrine is practically a modern substitute for instinct psychology and the older doctrine of original sin. However, due to the glamorous nature of the psychoanalytic theories, they have enjoyed wide popularity. Regardless of the position one takes in this matter, it must be admitted that the ideas and methods of treatment of psychoanalysis have profoundly influenced modern thinking, writing, and clinical practice.

*Shortcomings of Psychoanalysis*

Yet one feels that there is something lacking in the psychoanalytic system. It has not offered a satisfactory explanation for the personality disorders of many types of patients. Neither has it relieved their sorry condition to any great extent. Psychoanalysis offers many nimble and often ingenious explanations of the processes of behavior. It believes it has a logical system of cause and effect in the neurosis field. It explains nervous symptoms as disguised outlets for sexual suppressions or for the will to power motive. We see that psychoanalysis is based on partial truths. It has built a great structure on the rather insecure foundation of a limited analysis of the complexities of human nature. This criticism is of course true of all psychological systems including our own interpretations but it is particularly prominent in systems of Freud, Adler and Jung. These psychoanalysts recognized that there is a strong tendency in man to satisfy his personal desires or to advance his own ego. They apparently did not realize that excessive indulgence of the ego-striving motive may lead toward utter prostration or complete personality breakdowns. Instead they contend that it is the thwarting of the cruder desires in the form of the demands of social ideals that brings about nervousness.

Furthermore psychoanalysts neglect to emphasize the fact that to be emotionally healthy man must balance his legitimate ego motive by attending to his social obligations. In short the psychoanalysts say that nervous troubles arise from the suppression of pleasure desires or of the drive for domination over others. We are proposing that such nervous difficulties arise as a reaction against the failure of the individual to combine in satisfactory balance his legitimate ego needs with his frequently unrecognized duty to contribute to the welfare of the group. Wholesome personality grows out of harmony among complementary motives not from expression or sublimation of evil tendencies. The road to adjustment is by way of living successfully in a manner that enables or at least assists others to live equally happily. Besides the sex motive is neither evil nor selfish. It is probably basically an expression of self negation in favor of racial propagation and nurture.

## V WHAT DOES GOOD PERSONALITY MEAN TO SOCIETY?

We can now summarize briefly the materials of the chapter and point out their importance for the welfare of society and the race. But before doing so we should perhaps remind the reader again that our discussion thus far is intended to represent an overview of the content of the book. Details and case presentations have been avoided since they will follow logically as the treatment expands into various aspects of the problems of personality and life.

*The Modern Conception of Personality*

Our modern idea of personality is a definite one. It includes, in addition to one's pattern of social skills, his facilities for meeting the requirements of his own inner nature as well as for making harmonious adjustments to the many obligations of the practical world around him. In order to fulfill these personal and social requirements in a way that makes for harmony and personal happiness, one must find satisfaction of, and give expression to, the basic motives of life. These motives or needs include (1) the requirements of physical well being, (2) the desire to be recognized as an individual of worth, ability, and independence, and (3) the need for contributing to society and the race by offering sympathy, care, and recognition to those who need such assistance. The desire for reasonable freedom to work out one's own plans and purposes may also be recognized as a fundamental human need.

*The good personality is defined, then, as the one in which a reasonably adequate balance among all these motives has been achieved.* Such a personality is in the nature of the case adjusted. It has met the requirements of its fundamental nature as we know it. Thus the good personality is the one in which the individual has enjoyed enough of the material things of life to keep him from physical decline, in which he has achieved enough success and recognition to provide the all important feeling of personal acceptance, and in which he has expended a reasonable amount of his energy in contributing to social welfare. The fact that there are a very gratifying number of such men

and women in our society today shows clearly that desirable personalities can be and have been achieved. We must lend our selves to the task of learning how such desirable results are brought about. We must also do everything in our power to promote the application of this knowledge in homes and schools. Thus as the frontiers of knowledge are pushed back we can hope to change in part at least the present widespread practice of letting children grow up in a haphazard and uncontrolled way. We have enough knowledge of the rudiments of human nature now to enable us to rear children a hundredfold more intelligently than we usually do. We believe that recognition of the fundamentals of human nature as set forth in this chapter in adequate as they may be should enable society to go far in developing in its children and youth the good personality that we have been describing.

### *Importance of Good Personality to Society*

The value to society of a healthy increase in the number of well-adjusted individuals should be apparent. It would mean a drift away from what some call a dog eat dog style of life. It would reduce greatly the burden of chronic nervousness which is typical of our civilization. The improvement of personality would be the natural and fundamental way to stem the tide of lawlessness. It represents a definite approach to the problem of balancing individual freedom and ambition with socialized outlooks and practices. Such improvement might conceivably reduce to a considerable extent the necessity of seeking continually for social panaceas or cure-alls that is it might minimize the number of schemes designed to ease the economic strains of the less successful without in any way helping them to increase their personal efficiency.

There is much to commend the plan of attempting to improve society by bringing up the collective quality of the individuals who comprise it. It is doubtful whether a self-directive emotionally stable and socially well-adjusted group of individuals would be particularly concerned with paternalistic programs of social betterment. It is a matter of whether we are going to approach our reforms by strengthening the foundation of our social structure or whether we are content to tinker with its superstructure. We prefer to attempt to build citizens who are not only



disposed to create a more equitable society but who can get along very well under relatively rigorous conditions

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## II IS THE ADJUSTED LIFE DETERMINED BY REASON?

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We have sketched the more basic features of human nature as they are known to students of personality today. Our next step is to consider man's basic needs in the development of the well adjusted life. We are also interested in determining how much guidance we can expect from our reasoning powers. To explain more clearly these issues we propose to develop our conclusions in terms of the following questions:

- I Is Reason Our Guide to Behavior?
  - II What Avenue Leads to the Adjusted Life?
  - III Where Do We Get Our Attitudes Toward Life?
  - IV What Changes Do Social Demands Make in Us?
  - V Is there Reason in the Progress of Mankind?
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## II IS THE ADJUSTED LIFE DETERMINED BY REASON?

### I IS REASON OUR GUIDE TO BEHAVIOR?

Investigation has revealed much knowledge concerning the deeper motives of human nature and given us new insight into the science of man. Questions of grave import for the welfare of the individual and the race also arise. We refer particularly to the problem of whether the well-ordered life is primarily determined by reason. If men guide their actions by the dictates of reason the task of adjusting personality to life is a relatively simple one. On such a basis we could merely point out in clear perspective the intelligent way of making life adjustments and expect normal and well-informed individuals to profit thereby and live accordingly. That people do not follow such a course is known to all. That they cannot is not so well understood. Many people still cling to the belief that to *know* the right is to *do* the right. Studies in the character field have shown the fallacy of this idea. They have shown that one must be *disposed* to *do right* as well as to *know what is right*.

#### *Is Action Determined by Attitude?*

Does this mean that we are at the mercy of our attitudes? Or has the progress of the race been made possible by man's superior intelligence? Such questions show us that the problem is anything but a simple one. Psychologists believe, however, that the solution is tied up in the answer to a more fundamental problem.

The real issue is *What are the real needs or driving factors in human nature?* At the present time there is no final answer. Yet the reader will recall that in our preceding chapter we arrived at a solution that has been shown to be capable to a great extent of explaining the directions that man's actions tend to take. We found that (1) the need for various necessary bodily satisfactions, (2) the need for realization of the powerful desire to be accepted as an individual of worth, and (3) the frequently unrecognized need for contributing to the welfare of others of

the race, constitute the main lines of incentive to action. *These are the drives or motives of personality.* And they appear to be related to the balancing principle in life which frequently brings about nervous symptoms as attempted checks against too much attention to one of the fundamental needs at the expense of the others.

### *The Role of Intelligence in Life Adjustment*

Where, then, does intelligence as a problem-solving agency come in? So far as we know, first of all, it falls outside of the field of personality motives. Intelligence must therefore be regarded as an adjustive factor in man that *serves* rather than *guides* the basic driving motives of his personality. Our original childhood motives soon become increased to literally hundreds or thousands of wishes, desires, and impulses to behave in certain ways. Our intelligence becomes the agency for furthering the demands of these motives. Although it is true that motives and intellect are related parts of the whole pattern of the personality, we tend to do what our motives prompt us to do and then to use our intellects to justify ourselves. For the most part, we justify our way through life. We seek satisfaction for our desires and try to convince ourselves that because we make many fine moves we are being guided by logical reasoning.

Actually we are being driven by our motives. We are using what we call reasoning, thinking, planning, and the like in reducing the stresses which the motives set up. This is especially true in connection with those life activities which further our basic needs and ambitions. If we are sufficiently hungry, we think of food and take active steps toward securing the same. If we are in pain we make intelligent moves designed to relieve the stress. If we are anxious to make a good impression with some one, we groom ourselves well and proceed to put on our best manners. In case we are desirous of selling something or securing a new position, we muster all the intelligent arguments and selling points that our intellect can produce. When we wish to convert someone to our cause or convince others of the virtues of our moral codes, we wax eloquent in our flights of reason.

It seems, then, that *reason is not our incentive to action.* It is rather the servant of behavior, the latter being determined by the deeper driving forces of motive and need. We recognize, of

that teachers should focus their efforts first of all on the development in their students of emotionalized attitudes.

This means advocating education for the development of socially desirable attitudes and convictions of right and wrong. It makes this goal equal or superior to the advancement of scientific knowledge and intellectual brilliancy. One program provides a solid basis for constructive living, the other offers a way of satisfying the basic purposes of the learner, be they virtuous or self-centered. That very bright people frequently use their intellectual powers to further criminal ends is evident. That such individuals seldom live a happy well-ordered life is frequently forgotten.

## II. WHAT AVENUE LEADS TO THE ADJUSTED LIFE?

### *Intellect and the Welfare of Society*

It is not hard to find examples of social difficulties into which the brilliant but undirected intellects of immoral people have thrown us. Scientists, philosophers, psychologists, great divines, economists, statesmen, educators, and even laymen are beginning to point them out frequently. As previously mentioned, Dr. Alexis Carrel has with considerable logic called attention to the fact that our unplanned industrial development has resulted in a state of affairs in which the scientific creations of the human mind are getting out of control and threaten to devour our civilization. Such development has apparently been dictated by the unguided efforts of men devoid of both social vision and knowledge of the requirements of human nature. A situation has developed that threatens to stifle man's moral and ethical possibilities. Instead of leading us into the promised land of individual and social happiness, says this author, science has betrayed us.

The present author recently read the conclusions of two well known psychologists, both of whom are much concerned over what our very capable but often unbridled intellects have done to us. One of these gentlemen recounts a rather disquieting list of experiences which convince him of the futility of using reason as a sole guide to the well-adjusted life. He believes he has seen ill-grounded logic lead many a person into greater inconsistencies and more misery than any amount of belief in simple morals and authoritative religion could possibly do. The other psychologist laments the demoralizing results of using scientific

knowledge for self-gratification instead of devoting it to the more wholesome ends of social and racial betterment. He declares that such a program can never result in a satisfactory balancing of egoistic and social motives. He regards such balance as being a condition requisite to sound mental health and racial progress.

### *The Fallacy of Intellectual Education*

Professor George S. Counts of Columbia University has advocated the abandonment of what he calls the 'fallacy of intellectualistic education' in the public schools. As Dr. Counts points out, the receiver of such an education may be so devoid of (in doctrinated) social ideals and personally accepted moral principles that nothing stirs him. Being interested mainly in the more abstract, pure-science aspect of the social as well as the physical and biological sciences, he cannot get interested in the general problem of human suffering and injustice. He is unable to appreciate the fundamental nature of some of the more basic rules of living and other homely but indispensable foundations of group life.

The possible undesirable conduct of misguided intellect seems quite apparent. Yet we are not inclined to be so pessimistic about the problem as some appear to be. It seems that our knowledge of the essentials of human nature as presented in the preceding chapter offers clues to attainable solutions. But before we proceed to a discussion of the possibilities of a satisfactory life plan, we must give some attention to the plight of both young and old who exalt intellect above social attitudes.

### *The Origin of Moral Codes*

A brief study of the historical development of our many social standards and moral codes is usually sufficient to convince anyone that they have arisen for the most part in response to man's search for a better way of life. They are welfare doctrines that have served practical needs in the development of society. They are the results of the many growing pains the race has encountered in its quest for individual adjustment and social harmony. Some of these standards, like changing styles and temporary emergency regulations, are of minor importance and need not be regarded as pillars of social solidarity. Others, like the marriage institution, the sanctity of contracts, loyalty to our

fellow men, and honor in financial matters are of great importance in holding society together. On a practical basis these and similar human regulations have proved their worth as social welfare principles. A well-ordered community is always such because most of its citizens respect and exemplify these principles.

But the critical point of our discussion is that these standards of common behavior are not primarily creations of logic or scientific reasoning. They are racial achievements in constructive living, not brain-children of our super-intellectuals. Furthermore, when subjected to analysis by cold logic they often turn out to be indefensible. This is particularly true of some of our moral codes. And that in the face of the fact that these codes have in themselves proved to be indispensable in cementing our social relations. In short, we do not regulate ourselves primarily by intellectually determined considerations. Undirected intellectualism, brilliant though it may be, sometimes tends to lead away from rather than toward common security and happiness. The better rules of the game by which we live are what they are because they offer a realization of our fundamental needs.

So we conclude that our finer moral values and social standards in general represent the proven way to find a balance of man's need for offering selfless service on the one hand and of achieving personal distinction on the other. Thus, if we have respect for basic codes and live in harmony with intelligent personal convictions, we are on the road to the adjusted life. Pure reason cannot be our main guide, because it provides no real motive. It is not a stress producing need. Reason is the servant of motives and when the motives are immoral or ego-centric the intellect actually leads their possessor to even greater difficulties. It is important that one's basic motives be sound.

### *Examples of Misguided Reason*

Examples of the inconsistencies that appear when misguided reason is exalted above moral principles are common. A client of the author's was explaining the difficulties he was having with his supposedly "Victorian" wife who, according to the husband, did not understand or appreciate the modern way in married life. "My wife," he said, "objects to my attentions to other women on the ground that the marriage vow calls for faithfulness to her alone. Now to me that is an ultra-simple and completely old-

fashioned notion When you analyze it what is there so important about the marriage contract? You buy a marriage license from a civil service employee A minister or a justice of the peace, both of whom are material creatures like myself, stirs up the air by producing vibrations that can be picked up by the machinery of the ear within the proper range The man and woman concerned speak a couple of words which are commonly used in trifling conversations They are then licensed to live together as biological and social beings"

'What,' asked the client, 'is there so sacred about that to an educated man?' We must confess that from the standpoint of one on whom the richer values of age-old morals and racial achievements are thus lost, there is apparently nothing very hallowed about the physics and chemistry of the marriage ceremony But think of the loss to the race of a widespread acceptance of such an analysis of the marriage relation Furthermore we can still subscribe to the old saying that wisely declares the proof of the pudding is in the eating Our friend was admittedly very unhappy Following the loss of his faithful wife he drifted from bad to worse, losing what friends he had eventually drugging himself with cultist writings and doctrines

Another case is illustrative A certain young man who was much given to personal vices when checked up about the course he was taking replied something like this Having dispelled the old myth of responsibility to a supposed personal God why should I be concerned about your puritanical morals? My analysis of this earthly walk shows me that it is merely a sojourn between two darknesses I came out of one blackness and will end up by being engulfed in another Why shouldn't I have as good a time as possible in the meantime? Why crucify my flesh and be subject to your cramping standards? They are impossible except to a prude And why should I be concerned about the chastity of the girl I marry? What is wrong with a woman of the world that cannot be ascribed to the prejudice of narrow minds? I propose to have a good time and get by with as much immediate pleasure as possible

### *Importance of Standards of Right and Wrong*

This is the view of the extreme advocate of "logical reasoning It is hard to refute on purely scientific grounds that is it is hard



to meet when the individual lacks respect for the more homely but racially important moral achievements. However this is not really a case of the rule of reason over convictions. It is rather an example of the way the intellect is used as a tool to justify undesirable motives. The desire so often prompts the action and the intellect justifies the course that the action takes.

We could multiply examples but the point is no doubt clear. We believe that the fallacy of the brilliant mind in moral matters is fairly well exposed. Lacking respect for the really stabilizing controls of conduct and being driven by shifting desires the individual of capable intellect frequently tries to ignore our most cherished social codes. He calls reason his guide not realizing that the true purposes of existence are determined by deeper considerations. In a sense such a person is unanswerable in that he does not take into account the stabilizing influence of certain standards of right and wrong and of a wholesome attitude toward the welfare of society. In the larger view all of these factors must be taken into account. From the angle of the psychologist who deals constantly with unhappy people, *the truly intelligent view of this whole matter is the one that recognizes the importance of living on the basis of socially desirable standards of right and wrong.* The truth is that those who do so are usually wholesome and well balanced individuals.

### *Stages of Moral Maturity*

It has been our experience that there are about three levels of maturity in understanding the relative positions of intellect and moral sense in the interpretation of life. Some never get past the first stage which is perhaps just as well for those of moderate intellect. Others rise above the first but never seem to be able to graduate from the second stage. These people are extremely numerous and constitute more or less of a menace to the progress of society. A smaller third group come to attain a degree of insight into a true philosophy of life that makes them extremely valuable to social progress.

The group in the first stage is composed of the thousands who having been taught a rigid moral code at their mother's knee proceed to live accordingly in a routine way unmindful of the controversies going on all around them. They are grounded in the various beliefs advocated by the church and live in accord

with the more or less popular ideas of conservative living. Perhaps they are the pillars of society. At least they are the strength of the church and of other conservative forces in our society. They are frequently intolerant and prejudiced. In a simple sense these people have found one avenue to the adjusted life. Their basic needs are realized sufficiently to insure a fairly well balanced personality.

### *The "Liberalism" Stage of Development*

The group in the second stage is composed of those who encountered the original religious teachings but who later became of an inquiring mind. They may have joined the scientific revolt against all things supernatural and concerned with faith. They believe they have detected the fallacies of Christian beliefs, and of religious matters in general. They proceed to glorify reason as such and to extol the wonders of the sciences. They become agnostics and gradually drift toward interest in the less conservative controls of personal and social living. Not being anchored to a religious code, they may flit from one thing to another. Dr. Louis L. Thurstone of the University of Chicago has found from his studies of human attitudes that liberal ideas and beliefs tend to be found in clusters. That is to say, individuals who believe in easy divorce tend also to subscribe to communism, atheism, and similar beliefs. There is a distinct tendency for liberalism to spread, especially among people of high intelligence.

There is a sub-group within this class composed of those who have given up their early religious practices in part but who, instead of accepting scientific interpretations of life, have gone in for cults of all kinds, such as astrology, numerology, clairvoyance, palmistry, Unity, Rosicrucianism, and spiritualism. Some individuals appear fairly well satisfied with these beliefs, but a liberal share of the psychologists' clients come from their ranks.

### *The Nature of Moral Maturity*

The third group comprises the relatively small but extremely important class of individuals who have come to see the importance for individual happiness and group harmony of adherence to a social code and to a view of life based on intelligent attitudes. They realize that intelligence, when devoid of moral founda-

tions, is not a safe avenue to an adjusted life. They see in common adherence to our better ideas of right and wrong the avenue to a happier existence. They realize that moral living, motivated by intelligent social insight, satisfies man's dynamic drives, and thus makes for an adjusted life.

### III WHERE DO WE GET OUR ATTITUDES TOWARD LIFE?

If the quality of our behavior and the direction of our intellectual efforts are to a large extent determined by the ways in which we have learned to satisfy our desire for acceptance and social security, we are naturally led to ask the three questions: Where do our attitudes toward life originate? How do these attitudes become drives to action? How may they be regulated so as to insure a reasonably well balanced life? If we can find answers to these questions we shall be in a favorable position to understand and solve those moral and ethical issues which often involve so much unhappiness. At least we may have a key to the development of a better quality of citizens than it has been our good fortune to encounter in this and previous generations.

#### *Where Do Our Attitudes Toward Life Originate?*

Considerable evidence is now available indicating that the major attitudes of an individual are established in the home. Children inherit physical characteristics. We have learned from observation and study, however, that the beginnings of psychological traits and the general pattern of personalities with their different attitudes toward life, are essentially home-made.

This fact encourages us to believe that through intelligent early training we may rear a generation of citizens who will be inclined to use their rational powers in the service of well balanced and socially sound motives. This hope is definitely limited by the fact that the collective ability and willingness needed to rear such a group are far from being available in this generation. Parents too often deal with their offspring on the basis of relieving their own stresses, not always on the basis of the best interests of the children. They are powerfully influenced by the way they have balanced or failed to balance their own motives and frequently spoil their children's chances for a

wholesome life by giving them a bad start That they do this unwittingly does not help matters

### *How Children's Attitudes Develop*

Although this is not a volume on child psychology, it will serve to illustrate our point if we state briefly how attitudes toward life naturally arise

There is much evidence to indicate that in a general way we can readily assist children in developing wholesome attitudes It is perfectly possible to bring about desirable dispositions in the growing personalities of children This we may do by helping them to achieve a balance between ego recognition and generous behavior toward others There are many ways of giving recognition, respect, and appreciation to a small child, even an infant, without overdoing the matter When such recognition is blended with a program of definite experience in doing favors for and sharing with others, the child develops a well balanced personality He finds expression for his own legitimate ego striving and at the same time experiences the spontaneous joys of receiving the good will of others

Such a program promotes wholesome personality growth It develops the finer attitudes toward life which determine sane responses to conditions as the child grows older In teaching the child to be generous toward his family and his playmates one must be careful to make each experience pleasing to him as well as to the recipient of his favor Otherwise he might feel that he was getting the short end of the bargain and become jealous It is not difficult for sensible parents to bring about symmetrical growth in a child Balanced development enables the youngster gradually to learn those social graces that are known to be essential to adjustment to the larger society of which he will become a member

### *How Undesirable Attitudes Develop*

Unfortunately, many parents are themselves unadjusted They are frequently motivated by self-centered or hopelessly sentimental motives They do not feel particularly inclined to make a study of how childhood environments should be controlled By continually suppressing the child's nature, some

force him to fight for everything he gets. This thwarting prepares him for much friction when he gets to school where such an attitude is not tolerated. Other parents will indulge a child's every whim, thus causing him to become hopelessly conceited and dependent. These attitudes lead inevitably to self-centered behavior and a glaring disregard for the rights of others. Such an antagonistic start in life can only mean later imbalance of personality with its attendant unhappiness.

Then there is the parent who dominates his child so completely as to develop in him a serious inferiority feeling. This sensitive condition represents the affliction of thousands of our present crop of unhappy personalities. There are many cases in which cruel treatment has caused the boy or girl to hate the parents and all others associated with them. This attitude frequently results in a feeling of suspicion toward the world and all social organizations, coloring the individual's whole experience, and often resulting in a cynical, unsocial slant on life. Almost anyone could mention cases that illustrate these forms of personality disturbance.

### *The Modern View of Trait Development*

It must not be supposed, however, that small children develop through a few scattered experiences the attitudes which determine how they will respond to people in later life. Careful investigation over a period of years has shown that early traits are small and specialized. These are learned in connection with each experience. It is not until the child has enjoyed a great many such specialized experiences along one line that he can begin to associate them with some general trait. A child must be reasonably mature before he can be expected to understand how separate experiences belong to some regulatory principle.

As an illustration we may take the situation in which a child has fallen and hurt herself. She is lying a short distance away. In the company of a small boy we run to the rescue of the girl. We pick her up, dust off the dirt as best we can and help her to dry her tears. Thus our little boy has enjoyed a definite experience in being what we call sympathetic. Let us say that to date he has had no concise knowledge of what sympathy means. Now we have taught him exactly what a sympathy situation is like and just what to do about it. Besides, he has had a good

time He acted and received approval for his kindness His ego received recognition at the same time that he served another person But once is not enough The boy must experience sympathy behavior such as this scores of times Another time we lead him to help a child who has broken his toy Later he may comfort a youngster who has lost his dog And so on in definitely

When these definite incidents are multiplied into the hundreds the child becomes disposed toward sympathy actions He may also begin to form an ideal of sympathy which he can use throughout life He develops the trait of sympathy Or to put it in another way, the child cultivates the disposition to be actively sympathetic when the right occasions arise He has identified himself with that kind of behavior and is disposed to carry it out From his many definite experiences he finally forms a broad attitude toward life This attitude makes him generally though not necessarily always sympathetic in feeling and in action We may help the child expand his experience in the same way to include traits of loyalty honesty self-control confidence respect courage and dependability Or more unfortunately he may come to be dishonest disrespectful disloyal hateful and slovenly Although these may be called traits or general attitudes it can be seen that instead of being separate blocks in personality they are actually groupings of definite acts They are the determiners of how the child will balance his motives and his life They make or break his personality

### *How Do Attitudes Become Drives to Action?*

It is a basic axiom of psychology that a person's actions tend strongly to take the direction his attitudes dictate For instance a hungry man is driven to seek and secure food For similar reasons he is motivated to seek relief from excessive pain These attitudes are determined by inner physical needs But an individual may be inclined to respond in many other ways that are not so definitely tied up with bodily or even social needs As examples he may be strongly disposed to go to a ball game to run to a fire to argue with his neighbor or to punish his offspring As the well known psychologist Dr Edward L. Thorndike has told us to be permitted to do what we are in readiness to do is very satisfying That we actually do what we are in

clined to do, if we can possibly manage to do so, is a fact of human nature that is known to all. We see then, that the tendencies to behavior which we usually call attitudes are the determiners of our actions. They in turn are based on our wants or needs.

We have now learned the origin and the conditions which create these driving attitudes, some of which may be desirable and others perverted. Our real purpose is to see what we can do about controlling them.

### *Importance of Proper Home Environment*

Attitudes come from the home or other early environment. Their quality is thus dependent upon the effectiveness with which parents are able to control the early experiences of their children. Water cannot rise higher than its source, neither can parents expect to develop child personalities that rise above the conditions under which they live and grow.

We must realize that perverted attitudes grow out of the unequal satisfaction of life's basic needs. Hate, for instance, is the result of the too severe suppression of the individual's desire for personal recognition. Inferiority comes from forcing a person to fail or to feel inadequate continuously, thus breaking his morale and causing him to give up his striving to get ahead. Selfishness comes from pampering the child's ego and failing to teach him to share with others. Many more examples could be given but the principle should be clear. Children, like the rest of us, are under constant stress to satisfy their legitimate need for recognition. When too frequently suppressed or unnecessarily indulged, they develop various unwholesome attitudes toward life.

This brief account of attitude development should suggest the extreme importance of the home as the architect of future men and women. It is here that the future citizen must develop those solid attitudes that will give desirable direction to action and use of intelligence. Children possess ability, and if this ability is to operate along constructive lines it must be supported by those virile personality qualities which characterize men and women of stability and of fine social vision. In the home and later in the school and by means of the methods described preparation is made for stability in later life. It is there that the stable quali-

ties needed for successful marriage are inculcated. It is there that convictions and feelings about the higher standards of living are determined. And it is in the home that the groundwork for the development of social effectiveness is laid.

In short, the home and the school are the institutions where early avenues to the adjusted life may be found. To parents and teachers who understand these things, the process of helping children build the right attitudes and find balanced expression of their fundamental needs is not particularly difficult. And herein lies our hope for the future. But many, perhaps most, parents are not prepared by either temperament or education even to understand such a program, much less are they able to undertake it. Nevertheless, much can be done to overcome early environmental handicaps.

#### IV WHAT CHANGES DO SOCIAL DEMANDS MAKE IN US?

##### *Importance of the Socialized Personality*

Some may feel that we have been promoting a doctrine of individualism, or favoring a society in which the character of the whole community is determined almost entirely by the collective quality of its individual members. As we shall endeavor to show, this is only partly true. We realize that society imposes many regulations, customs, traditions and beliefs upon its members. Indeed, we realize that to a great extent it shapes their lives. Furthermore, it is perfectly apparent that strong but non-socialized individuals would fail to make a harmonious, thoroughly welded social order. Yet it is our contention that a man or woman who has received the kind of home and school training we have been describing, and who has developed the social abilities that are necessary to acceptance by others, is harmoniously adjusted to society. We mean by this that individual personality requires a social or racial outlook.

There is no such thing as satisfying individual motives without including some consideration for others. These functions are interlocked, they are inseparable aspects of a balanced life. From the clinical angle, where the plight of self-centered persons is so apparent, there can be no real difference between man as an individual and man as a cooperative member of society. According to the idea of wholesome personality that we are ad-



vancing, an individual cannot find peace with himself in the form of personal security without attending to his social duties. We say this in spite of the fact that the discharge of such duties automatically means some curtailment of individual pleasures in favor of the common good. Thus we see no point in the possible suggestion that our program of building stalwart individuals with well-disposed attitudes may fail to produce a well-organized society. As we shall point out shortly, our program is precisely that advocated for an ideal democracy.

### *Morals and the Doctrine of Mental Discipline*

Some may be inclined to think that our mention of people with stalwart qualities or with a strong moral sense commits us to the old exploded doctrine of mental discipline. This is the belief which held that one could train his mind by drill on difficult intellectual tasks or strengthen his character by continually doing distasteful duties. Earlier in this chapter we made it plain that in childhood behavior is very specialized. Children learn certain skills and develop certain psychological attitudes in definite stimulating situations. When these situations are multiplied under desirable conditions, the growing individual comes eventually to identify them with rules and principles which we label as being morally sound. Although behavior never becomes entirely consistent, the mature individual may, and under ideal conditions certainly does, come to approximate a program of living that is in accord with a consistent pattern of guiding principles. When these principles are in harmony with the demands of both his own nature and the common good, we say that the individual possesses a moral sense. Or we could say that he has attained a disciplined life. It is our belief that the truly socialized individual should and does identify himself with these broad aims

### *Religion and Social Improvement*

It has been suggested that the essentials of the program above have been long tried by religionists but with slight increase in universal righteousness. We are still very much harassed by the rising tides of crime, delinquency, intolerance, class struggles, political intrigue, war, and the ever-present economic serfdom. This is a pertinent question but in view of the fact that

we have devoted a section of a later chapter to the role of religion in the psychology of life adjustment we shall make here only a few comments. These might well include the point that we are not sure that practical religion has failed when it has been given a fair chance to register its effects.

One explanation for the partial failure of religious groups to develop socially well balanced personalities may well be the lack of a scientific program. Our approach is to endeavor to control the earliest experiences of the child in such a way as to insure the development of strong attitudes toward behaving in desirable ways. In that effort we utilize the principle of cause and effect as it operates in human nature. We would build in socially effective and personally satisfying attitudes toward life that, barring unusual and prolonged disturbing influences, dispose the child toward definite ways of behaving that can well give direction to his intellectual powers. It is a case of bending the twig by carefully selected and psychologically sound experiences that will on a cause and effect basis tend to ensure the development of a symmetrical tree.

If religious people do this in addition to emphasizing their special denominational doctrines they have a sound approach. If they either consciously or unwittingly neglect the essentials of early attitude building we cannot see how they are going to be successful except by chance. Insofar as they have not been able to build a better society it is because they have failed to understand and use true psychological principles as they function in the development of attitudes toward life. Perhaps these brief remarks may help to clarify the thinking of those who feel that because religion has not been able to stabilize society there is no possibility of success by any other means.

### *Moral Qualities in a Changing World*

It should perhaps be said too that adherence to the ideal of building men and women who have substantial moral qualities does not stamp one as being a reactionary in matters pertaining to the conduct of government to social and economic doctrines or to outlook on life in general. In a changing society such as ours flexibility of belief and behavior is admittedly important. It must be one of the qualities of those who hope to assist in the gradual development of better opportunities for all. Adaptabil

ity is essential to the development of more harmonious social conditions, of improvement in national morals, and of better personality adjustment on the part of the rank and file

There are many features of our common social heritage that need to be improved. Certainly men and women of integrity should be among the first to do what they can to bring about progressive improvement. Such individuals would not fail to see that many of our social, economic, political, religious, educational, and unclassified traditions need revising. But they would also recognize that there are principles of constructive living such as honesty, integrity, recognition of human rights, social obligations and mental faithfulness that are essential in the structure of civilized life. Substantial members of society would maintain that these social principles should not be subject to the wishes of crudely expedient individuals or groups. The substantial citizen will be flexible but constructively critical regarding all social and educational movements pertaining to the common good. He will be more or less disinterested in fluctuations in fashions, fads and non-essential fancies. He will, however, be courteously consistent in maintaining the standards of moral and civil codes.

### *Democracy and the Need of Good Personality*

There is much talk these days about the supposed failure of democracy as a form of government. It is said that human nature being what it is, our only hope so far as social harmony is concerned lies in accepting the way of dictatorship. Such a view holds that individuals have rights only insofar as these are implied in the rights of the state. At the base of this belief one can discern the inference that democracy, which regards individual freedom as being essential, is inadequate as a social policy. This failure is said to result from the dependence of a democracy upon the wishes of the individual rather than upon the collectively dominated will. There is no doubt some truth in this contention but it is our conviction that the way out of such a dilemma should be by means of improving and socializing individual character and personality. We certainly would not accept defeatist submission to the domination of an egoistic dictator.

Why can we not maintain a truly socialized democracy through voluntary individual and collective efforts? The answer is that

we can if we have the right kind of personalities. If our society were composed of people with the basic qualities and with the constructive dispositions that we have been describing in this chapter, we would have little concern about the breakdown of democracy. Such people would be happy in their service for and with the group. They would be found cooperating in the promotion of desirable social causes.

### *Good Personality and the Stability of Society*

It is a fundamental principle of mental health that the happiest people are those who give their energy to some constructive cause that means much to them and that serves the needs of humanity. There are thousands of issues within the framework of democracy that can command the allegiance and service of its citizens. We need no dictatorship to atone for our natures if we have been properly disposed from childhood. So we see that we are back to our original contention that the welfare of civilization is dependent upon our ability to rear well-adjusted socially minded personalities.

It is clear that the traditions, beliefs, prejudices and customs of society have, because of their authoritative and persistent nature, had much to do with the shaping of individual personalities. Yet there is ample ground for maintaining that the stability of society is in turn dependent upon the collective quality of its individual members. Without widespread individual integrity, our national standards might degenerate indefinitely. A broadening of the get by attitude might drag the group down to a level of living that is definitely detrimental to social welfare.

## V IS THERE REASON IN THE PROGRESS OF MANKIND?

Man is continually using ingenious methods in making numerous necessary adjustments to the material requirements of life. He solves his many problems by recourse, in part at least, to thinking, reasoning and planning. He has constructed a mechanical world that is the marvel of the ages. His intellect has produced material structures and mechanical devices, the complexity of which is almost beyond comprehension. Man has built social institutions and educational systems that assist him in understanding and solving the problems that arise in connec-

tion with his own psychological nature. He has wrested from the reluctant earth an array of luxuries and comforts that should satisfy every longing for freedom from oppressive labor. In short, he has through a laudable display of industry and intellectual ability, modified the world around him to the extent that he should be all but perfectly happy.

### *Why Man Is Not Happy*

The plain fact is, however, that mankind is neither well adjusted nor particularly happy. Reason and intellect have had their chance but the race as a whole is still searching for the phantom of solid satisfaction. True, there are many thousands of reasonably wholesome and contented personalities. These lead us to believe that a broad science of man, much of which is available now in the various scientific fields, can be developed that will greatly increase our knowledge of how to build wholesome men and women.

To get back to the point, our society still is greatly disturbed by neuroticism, insanity, crime, war, intolerance, excessive self-centeredness, and hundreds of lesser evils. The road to harmonious social relations is apparently not to be found by way of rational planning alone. Intellect is not an end in itself except as it throws light on the importance of attitude building. It is apparently a convenient directive agency utilized by our dominant motives, be they virtuous or otherwise. As we have seen, the intellect follows action with justification of the act and with suggestions for satisfying further desires.

### *Importance of Living a Balanced Life*

This state of affairs is what has led us to the realization that men's motives must be well balanced. Men must balance their self-realization needs with their more social motives early in life if obligations and a sense of duty are to give socially beneficial direction to their intellectual powers. Men must be developed who live by enlightened standards, who follow codes of conduct dictated by a desire to do what is regarded as being best for all concerned. Those who would stabilize society must have a sense of honor, and a capacity for accepting obligations. If society is to make progress its individual members will need to be con-

cerned about justice loyalty and other such racial virtues They cannot trust to the wishes of undirected intellect, biological morals or a crude opportunistic philosophy It is by conscious attention to the social virtues that man finds the avenue to the adjusted life

If the trend of mankind is to be upward we cannot content ourselves with the scientific improvement of our material environment We must study intently the methods by which men and women may be successfully motivated to respond and adjust to life in desirable ways We must learn how the days of youth may be so directed as to insure continuous satisfactory responses to both the requirements of individual nature and the demands of group life We must continue to discover better psychological methods for the development in early life of such qualities as emotional stability, self-direction social effectiveness sound judgment and courage—in short we must attain personalities that adjust to contemporary life while assisting in the creation of a better society

### *Good Personalities Can Be Developed*

The fact that there are and probably always have been people who approximate these qualities gives us ground for being optimistic about our chances for the future If such personalities have been produced in the past why can we not search out in a general way at least the methods used in the course of training involved? What is there to prevent us from refining these methods until we develop a sound personality building program? Actually much already has been done We have offered suggestions in this chapter based on known psychological facts and could present more if our volume were devoted to that subject The great drawback is that most individuals are apparently not in possession of sufficient knowledge or judgment pertaining to human nature Neither do they always have sufficiently attractive and wholesome personalities of their own to go very far in shaping the destinies of the oncoming generation At least their offspring and pupils frequently testify to their lack of understanding of the problem

Education along these crucial lines can be improved It is to this cause that as many as are able and willing should devote their energies

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### III WHEN ARE WE EMOTIONALLY MATURE?

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Psychologists are agreed that one of the strongest factors in the determination of human conduct is *emotion*. Some authorities affirm even that emotion is basic in the development of civilization. The development and control of emotional behavior from infancy to adulthood are dependent upon many factors. In some cases lack of adequate control occurs at various levels of infancy and adolescence. Such arrestment of development is usually called *infantilism* and is designated as *emotional immaturity*. It is not uncommon to find individuals who have attained wealth and distinction still persisting in *infantilisms*. A balanced personality involves the recognition and elimination, insofar as possible, of all evidence of emotional immaturity. Thus we shall consider in this chapter the extent to which the emotions influence our actions. Our discussion will endeavor to answer the following questions:

- I What Causes Emotional Immaturity?
  - II How Important Is Emotional Maturity?
  - III How May Emotional Imbalance Affect Success?
  - IV In What Way May Infantilisms Endanger Marriage?
  - V How May Emotional Maturity Be Attained?
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### III WHEN ARE WE EMOTIONALLY MATURE?

It is common knowledge that chronologically we grow older year by year. Yet we often hear the expression, even of adult behavior, that "he acted like a child." Such evidence indicates that chronological age does not always denote emotional or social maturity. In an attempt to satisfy his basic needs the infant tries various methods of influencing his elders. Some of these methods he finds successful and pleasant and others bring in their wake thwarting or lack of success. Those which get desirable results tend to be continued and gradually mold the child's patterns of behavior.

If we could control the environment of children in such a way that socially desirable responses would result in feelings of security and well being, and undesirable actions would yield unpleasantness and failure, it is probable that such infantilisms as we see exhibited when adults indulge in temper tantrums or continually get their feelings hurt would not develop. As it is, many individuals, depending upon the extent of their luck in encountering a satisfactory early environment, have developed certain false values or bad emotional traits. In addition to the familiar exhibitions of emotion seen in excessive anger, resentment, hatred, suspicion, discouragement, fear, and the like, complex and sometimes disastrous false values are formed concerning which a child may become highly emotional when challenged. Many such attitudes are carried into adult life.

Psychologists usually speak of emotions in their strongest form as emergency reactions. The emotional maturity of the individual can be gauged, however, by the seriousness of the emergency which precipitates excess emotion. In matters of emotional maturity many people never reach adulthood and in practically all of us there is some evidence of childish or adolescent emotional status. *It is through emotional instability that many of our conflicts arise and that we develop attributes condemned by society.*

## I. WHAT CAUSES EMOTIONAL IMMATURITY?

The tendency of individuals to compensate for some actual or imagined inferiority in undesirable ways is undoubtedly one of the reasons for much immaturity. As Dr. Paul Popenoe\* says: "Few of us attain that perfect balance between the two extremes of actual inferiority and self-importance that constitutes emotional maturity," intimating that emotional maturity is a balance between inferiority and superiority feelings. Dr. Popenoe cites Einstein with his freedom from posing and his refusal to reply to critics as an example of emotional maturity. Some followers of the psychoanalytic system believe that emotional immaturity represents a fixation at some stage of infant or adolescent development.

*The Influence of Early "Sets"*

We do not today accept the questionable concept of a series of fixed growth stages, each characterized by distinct emotions through which all children are supposed to pass. Yet there is evidence that "sets" or attitudes have developed at certain periods of life which have caused certain individuals to retain a type of behavior fairly characteristic of certain ages in childhood. Records of workers in the field of mental hygiene are available showing that fixations of this kind often occur when some questionable infantile or adolescent behavior, such as crying or pretended illness, appears to pay dividends. Self-centeredness is developed in early childhood by example and by lack of experience concerning the advantages of generosity. The day-dreaming escape from reality is retained by some people. One individual of our acquaintance regularly forgets her troubles by building elaborate castles in Spain. Inquiry has revealed the fact that an unhappy environment in childhood caused her to invent this means of reducing a feeling of insecurity, which has persisted in adult life in the absence of the necessity for such an escape mechanism.

The history of another acquaintance illustrates the influence of early childhood in fixing certain undesirable emotional sets. This individual's early childhood was spent in a home where the

\* Paul Popenoe, "Your Inferiority Complex." *Scientific American*, Vol. 160, No. 5, May 1939.

father criticized almost every act as foolish and often said that his children were dull, no good, and lazy. The child in question became stubborn, sensitive to criticism, and refused to work. After a family disaster caused his adoption into another home, proper treatment partially erased the early sets but he recently confided in the author that the word fool still brought an acute emotional reaction and that criticism was hard to take.

### *Examples of Observed Infantilisms*

The behavior which we are discussing as evidence of infantilism does not, of course, cover the thousands of acts which might indicate a failure to mature emotionally. When asked to make a list of infantilisms in the order in which they were encountered in everyday life, one hundred psychology students listed them as follows: (1) rationalization, or the tendency to give plausible reasons for inconsistent behavior, (2) showing-off, or attempting to attract undue attention by bluffing, posing, or wearing loud clothes, (3) anger when thwarted and resentment against authority and advice, (4) refusal to face reality, or conditions as they exist, (5) lack of consistency in conduct and emotions, (6) selfishness, (7) avoidance of difficult tasks, (8) jealousy, (9) decided crushes on individuals of the same sex, and (10) hero worship. Experience will no doubt suggest to the reader attitudes on the part of others and sets in his own life which originated in childhood. Each individual must make his own list.

Of the infantilisms listed some represent real attempts to compensate for actual inferiority and could more properly be called adjustment mechanisms. However, since in some cases where inferiority was not present infantile behavior was listed, it seems clear that some individuals who have little reason for attempted compensation have simply retained childhood characteristics, in other words, they have failed to mature emotionally.

## II HOW IMPORTANT IS EMOTIONAL MATURITY?

In speaking of emotional maturity Donald McLean, a psychologist, says

A person if he must be handicapped in any respect would better be stunted physically and would better have a limited mental

equipment than be immature emotionally. With grown-up emotions he will be more useful to society; he will be happier and have greater peace of mind and contentment than he could without the emotional development, even if his physical and mental development were quite adequate." \*

An illustration of the importance of emotional maturity is suggested by the conduct of a middle-aged man who became angered at his wife and left her in a busy city. After hours of search the police located him in a bus station where he had heard repeated broadcasts over the loud speaker for information concerning his whereabouts.

Life provides many such incidents, for nearly every shop has some employee who reacts to emergencies with a display of anger, and every campus has some individual who complicates social situations with his outbursts of unprovoked resentment. Such manifestations of childishness are unpleasant, but uncontrolled expressions of emotion are not the only ones detrimental to the individual and to society. Nearly everyone is acquainted with the kind of individual who, having become a martyr in his younger days, still believes that he receives the short end of everything in his fraternity house or that he gets a bad break in all his classes. At least that is his story. His fraternity brothers wonder why they invited him to the house and feel that if he would grow up emotionally he would have a better chance of becoming successful.

### *Examples of Emotional Immaturity*

Innumerable instances of childishness in adults are available to the observing. Probably one of the most common examples is seen in the individual who says he can get by in an office without "doing a lick of work" and in the college student who asserts that he "never has to crack a book." Everyone knows that such individuals are either just bragging, being dishonest with themselves, or they simply have not outgrown childish ways and habits. It is obvious that in the adult world effort is part of achievement.

We can perhaps illustrate further by citing the case of a youth of exceptional ability who inaugurated his career by securing a

\* Donald McLean, *Knowing Yourself and Others* Henry Holt & Company, 1938, p. 203

position in a large retail store. He became efficient in many ways and learned rapidly, but persisted in ignoring requests from those in authority. When cooperation was finally required this individual exhibited outbursts of emotion. Any change in duties or plans was openly resented. His excuse was that his superiors were old fogies and that they did not know what they wanted. Such an attitude soon resulted in the reluctant dismissal of an otherwise desirable employee. Subsequent inability to hold a job brought complete failure and finally resulted in a visit to a mental hygienist. A study of his case revealed that in early childhood this boy had lived in a home where every request for cooperation was repeated many times. If he did not wish to cooperate, all he needed to do was ignore the many appeals. If, however, the stress became too great he found that a fit of anger would extricate him from any responsibility for cooperation with other members of the household. The boy did not live in an orderly world where consistent rules of life were expected. Adequate emotional growth was practically impossible because of the success afforded by emotional outbursts.

### III HOW MAY EMOTIONAL IMBALANCE AFFECT SUCCESS?

The cases just cited illustrate the influence of adverse early experiences on the development of emotional stability. They also indicate some of the difficulties and maladjustments experienced by persons who exhibit immature tendencies in adult life. According to investigations approximately three times as many individuals lose positions because of inability to cooperate with their associates as are discharged for inefficiency.

It is thus clear that the individual who relies upon infantile or adolescent levels of behavior to meet adult life situations is doomed to meet with frustration and maladjustment. In her book *Personality, Its Development and Hygiene*, Winifred Richmond has suggested a useful classification of such inadequate modes of adjustment which she lists as personality types. These include (1) the *dependent security seeking* type described as persons who expect guidance and consideration from everybody — the clinging vines and timid souls, (2) the *unstable personalities*, or self-centered quarrelsome, bad tempered people who can not stand responsibility, (3) the *spoiled child* type who get their

feelings hurt easily and are incredulous, angry, resentful, or stubborn when their wishes are not implicitly met; (4) individuals with *persistent infantile habits* which result in baby talk, lisping, and mannerisms; (5) persons with a *homosexual outlook on life* who have retained adolescent attitudes on sex, such as the tomboy attitude by girls or the *Don Juan* attitude on the part of boys; and finally, (6) the *psychopathic and paranoid* personalities. The psychopathic personality is described as having become crystallized at an infantile level and as having retained the extreme self-centeredness and inability to profit by experience characteristic of the young child. The paranoid personality is said to represent an arrestment of development at the childhood or early adolescence level and is characterized by a heightened sense of self-importance or over-suspiciousness with resultant jealous behavior and development of a superiority complex.

It is easy to see difficulties ahead for any of the personality patterns described. Cooperation, team-work, and ability to get along with associates are almost indicative of economic advancement and security. The individuals described by Dr. Richmond have thus little chance of making a success in life.

### *Real Success vs. Economic Success*

All success is not, however, measured in terms of economic advancement or even economic security. Desirable success is probably more adequately gauged by the extent to which the individual is able to make adjustments to life situations and to contribute to the needs of his group. We often say of those who are personally and socially adjusted that they are happy people. Happiness, in this sense, may be thought of as being concomitant with adjustment.

The retention of infantile and adolescent traits in adult life seriously threatens adjustment. For example, the writer is acquainted with a well trained and skillful physician who has lost innumerable patients because of his infantilisms. When opposed in any way he responds with a flash of rage which is comparable only to the temper tantrums of childhood. In this individual's case certain subjects of conversation always bring strong emotional reactions.

The loss of material success, although very disturbing, is not to be compared with estrangement from friends, associates, and

parent One of our clients was so dominated by an attachment to his mother that he failed to obtain a college education because of his dependence upon her Because of this situation he also failed to marry Today at sixty this individual is faced with the unhappy fact that he has achieved no worthy goal in life All his ambitions have been thwarted, his only consolation is that he has been good to his mother She would no doubt have been much happier in the possession of sturdy grandsons and granddaughters

### *The Problem of Homosexuality*

The term homosexual refers to persons who have a very strong sexual attraction toward members of the same sex An extreme degree of homosexuality may even lead to sexual intimacy with other homosexuals It must be remembered however, that like other personality traits homosexuality varies in degree The real cause of extreme sexual inversion is not clear to psychologists Mild cases which do not result in sexual behavior but which influence the attitude of the individual in many phases of his life may well be regarded as infantilisms

Homosexuality may develop into a problem that requires society to interfere and to attempt regulation of the individual In its mild form homosexuality is often a factor in the failure in college of otherwise normal individuals who experience constant crushes on other members of their own sex.

A young woman of our acquaintance has been seriously handicapped in her college work because of one crush after another on girl friends with an accompaniment of jealousy suspicion and melancholy when her affection is not returned A promising friendship with a young engineer was broken because of her excessive interest in other individuals of her own sex The outcome of such an attitude certainly will not be a happy one unless this girl can be led to develop better personal and social adjustment

### *What Considerations Should Influence Sexual Behavior?*

Every young man or woman entertains some thoughts about sex He or she associates with members of the other sex to some extent and develops some system of morals in regard to courtship



and sexual relations Every boy encounters a certain amount of banter about sex experience, and every girl has to decide whether or not she will pet and exactly how far petting should go

Decisions along these lines are usually highly emotionalized and thus have a grave bearing on stability in adult life Their import for the maintenance of personality integrity is a matter of considerable moment In the case of the young man the questions are usually "What shall be my attitude toward virtue and morality?" "Am I justified in relieving sex stresses through intimacy with members of the other sex?" "Are there socially acceptable ways of relieving sex stresses?" "What effect will my decisions have upon my adult life?" Such questions are not only problems for college students, they exist in many phases of adult life

Conservative groups would no doubt say that there is no problem involved here, but we shall postpone consideration of this viewpoint and discuss the matter on the basis of how various decisions may affect the life of the individual

### *What Is the Unbiased Viewpoint?*

A practical way of discussing the sex problem above is that of considering the effects of various decisions These decisions must take into account their possible influence not only upon the individual but also upon the welfare of the whole of society

A recent investigation will illustrate what we have in mind In this study one hundred youths between sixteen and twenty years of age were asked if they wanted the girl whom they expected to marry to be virtuous, i e., to have never been sexually intimate with a male Every young man questioned hoped to marry a virtuous girl Over fifty per cent would marry only supposedly virtuous women, approximately thirty per cent said that they would consider the circumstances, and the remaining members of the group added that they would have to be tremendously in love to give up the ideal of marrying a virtuous girl Every member of the group wanted his mother and sisters to be virtuous Some were so upset over the latter question that they demanded to know if the inquiry was meant as an insinuation regarding the members of their family

We come now to another sex problem of crucial importance Is the boy justified in insisting upon one standard for himself

and another for the opposite sex? The biological difference between the sexes and the nature of their separate functions in reproducing the race is the first argument usually offered for accepting a double standard of conduct. Boys often claim that "there are two kinds of girls." They then adopt a double standard and justify themselves in associating sexually with one kind and marrying the other kind.

Although it is true that nature has relieved men of the prenatal care of children, other important considerations offer sound reasons for a single standard. Social diseases such as gonorrhea and syphilis are widespread and the promiscuous male is often their victim. These diseases can be cured but often continue many months before they are detected and their effects frequently linger after an apparent cure.

### *The Influence of Early Sets*

We have agreed to shelve morality for the present, but we can not ignore the fact that violations of the early attitudes of an individual bring in their wake emotional conflicts no matter how reasonable he may later feel his conduct to be. Practically every individual has been taught early in life that racial experience has demonstrated the dangers of illicit sexual relations.

A life example should serve to illustrate the difficulties involved in ignoring the sets developed by early training. A young man of good family, who had lived a fast life, fell deeply in love with a girl with whom he had been intimate. Early training and pride in his own sisters and mother had previously led him to the conclusion that a man could never marry his mistress. The emotional conflict which this dilemma generated finally caused the young man to lose a good position and he is rapidly dissipating his savings. Such may be the result when we violate deeply entrenched attitudes. This may be true even when no question of morality or religion is involved.

Robert Burns, the poet, whose life experiences qualified him to speak, has summed up the matter thus

The Sacred lowe o' weel plac'd love,  
Luxuriantly indulge it,  
But never tempt th' illicit rove  
Tho naething should divulge it

I waive the quantum o' the sin,  
 The hazard of concealing,  
 But, och! It hardens a' within,  
 And petrifies the feeling!

### *Sex Problems of Girls*

Girls are continually confronted with the problem of what attitude to adopt toward petting. Girls apparently differ among themselves far more than do boys in the intensity of the sex urge. This is quite understandable and the explanation can be found in books which deal primarily with sex problems. The question that we wish to discuss is how far the girl with marked sexual urges should allow them to dominate her conduct. We should perhaps consider as well what concessions the girl with little interest in sex matters should be called upon to make in order to fill a normal place in society. Girls expect and should enjoy associations with the opposite sex in a social way. It is in the matter of how far social usage demands that they conform to the current beau's idea of "being a good sport" that many fall into intimacies which may prove to be distinct personality handicaps.

At least partial answers to these questions may be found in the statements of the previously mentioned one hundred boys who preferred virtuous girls as future wives. Regardless of the arguments that some men may use to influence her, the girl who "falls for a line" is almost out of the picture as a probable wife, and usually enjoys only a brief reign as the current "flame." "Always a bridesmaid but never a bride" is not half so tragic as "always a sweetheart but never a wife." Regardless of the moral principle involved the "loose" girl also risks the condemnation of the public. Her mistakes are less easily concealed in case of pregnancy and she is just as susceptible to venereal disease as is the male. A girl is therefore safe in petting only to the extent that her affections are involved, and then only to such a degree that she is sure of remaining always in control of her actions.

What is the answer to the problem of sex urges and associations? Each individual must in the end decide these questions for himself. A sound basis for judgment will be found in a thorough knowledge of the natural sex development of the individual, in sane sex hygiene, and in an understanding of the regulations which society has placed upon sex matters. Sexual

intimacy is a normal part of the life of the individual entirely aside from the necessity of perpetuating the species, but the experience of the race has so far provided only marriage as the sphere within which it can be exercised without danger of the feelings of guilt and inferiority and the mental conflict which adversely affect personality. Parents should teach their children these things in a normal, logical way rather than allow them to learn about sex matters from sources eager to misinterpret these fundamental facts of adjustment.

Youth should also be taught that sexual desire itself may be sublimated or redirected into useful activities. Strenuous exercise on the football field or on the tennis court will often relieve sex stress. Creative activity of almost any type will often serve the same purpose. Probably many of our great creative works in every field of human endeavor represent redirected sexual stress. It is the inactive individual with few interests who is most likely to complain of sex frustration.

### *Romantic Love and Marriage*

We should add that there is much more to courtship than merely the desire to relieve sexual stress. Most of the associations of youth are based on a desire for pleasant companionship with more or less of a possibility of the development of romantic love. This is a sound basis upon which to maintain such relationships and offers each participant an opportunity to learn something about the opposite sex without endangering his future. As a basis for marriage, romantic love is a comparatively recent innovation in the affairs of mankind and probably is superior to sexual attraction as the foundation for matrimony. The United States is probably the only country in which it is almost entirely accepted. Our many divorces are often used as an argument against such a basis for marriage. Many unhappy marriages are no doubt based on "a moonlight night, a pair of blue eyes, and a little romance." These considerations suggest that in addition to experiencing normal sex interest and romantic love a couple should have many interests in common and should make sure of the absence of serious conflicts before marriage.

Marriage is the normal and acceptable outlet for sexual stress, as well as being an important phase of our social structure. Despite the psychological factors in the sexual relationship and the

stress that occurs in the rearing of children, real success in marriage seems to be dependent upon the degree of emotional maturity attained by the parties to the contract. The first thing that comes to mind in connection with marriage is whether or not the parties concerned are socialized, that is, whether they are reasonably extrovertive in the better sense of that term. As someone has put it, 'Marriage is not only a matter of *finding* the right partner, but one of *being* the right partner as well.'

### *The Basis of a Successful Marriage*

The success of marriage is dependent to a great extent upon the temperament of its partners. Although the major interests of the two parties should be reasonably similar, it is important that each or at least one member, be unselfish. Pronounced introversion and extroversion have considerable significance here. The self-centered introvert, who thinks primarily of his own comfort, his own rights, and his personal pleasure, is headed for much trouble in matrimony. In the main such an individual is disposed to get, not contribute. Hence he can hardly be expected to adjust to a shared enterprise. On the other hand the emotionally stable and generously inclined individual who has learned that life is a process of contributing security and recognition as well as of getting the same, stands a good chance of becoming a valuable marriage partner. Besides such a person would be very likely to be respectful of the rights and privacies of a member of the opposite sex. Being better poised and usually more socially experienced than the introvert, he would also be much less likely to contract a hasty marriage based on infatuation or mere physical attraction.

In his study of the personality qualities of happily and unhappily married people Dr. Lewis M. Terman of Stanford University found considerable evidence for these observations.\* The unhappily married and divorced couples studied were on the whole somewhat introvertive. They tended to be emotionally unstable, lacking in self-sufficiency, not greatly interested in selfless service nor inclined to participate in social activities. The happily married men and women were, on the contrary, extro-

\* W. B. Johnson and Lewis M. Terman. *Personality Characteristics of Happily Married, Unhappily Married and Divorced Persons*. *Character and Personality* Vol. 3, 1935 pp. 290-311.

vertive in trend. They exhibited the stability, self-sufficiency, social aggressiveness, and generosity which we have come to associate with well-adjusted people. They were, as might be expected, interested in group enterprises and social causes.

Although the above study is not necessarily conclusive, it does suggest the importance of extrovertive personality qualities for success in marriage. Clinical cases have illustrated this point time after time. We could wish that more were made of it in connection with the whole question of preparation for marriage. It is questionable whether any other factor, sexual compatibility included, is so important in the stabilization of marriage. This finding appears to be especially true if we realize that most marriage difficulties, be they sexual, financial, religious, social, or concerned with the rearing of children, are based on some form of intolerance. And intolerance is an ego-centric characteristic. These facts have led some to conclude that *preparation for marriage is made in the home where the main lines of either ego-centered or generous attitudes are laid down by the kind of parental and other treatment encountered.*

We return thus to the suggestion that early environment profoundly modifies heredity to make the child what he is. If the school and the home can develop emotionally stable, socialized individuals, the success of marriage will tend to be insured. Thus society suffers or profits by the skill or lack thereof with which these agencies perform their work.

#### V. HOW MAY EMOTIONAL MATURITY BE ATTAINED?

By the phrase "an old dog cannot learn new tricks" and other such familiar sayings, people often infer that undesirable habit patterns once fixed cannot be altered and new habits established. Psychologists believe, however, that reconstruction of behavior is possible. An entire chapter of this volume is devoted to the problem of developing a desirable personality. Since the general problem of improvement has been covered in a fairly exhaustive manner, we shall devote the present discussion to the specific problem of the control of our emotions.

#### *The Importance of Health*

The matter of health has scarcely been mentioned. Yet good health is certainly a definite factor in one's ability and determina-

tion to recognize and change adverse and objectionable habit patterns. Included under health we would mention glandular balance. Any individual who feels that his health or glandular imbalance is a contributing factor to maladjustment should consult a reputable physician. Annual health check-ups are desirable; their value cannot be too highly stressed.

### *The Value of Objectivity*

A desire for self-improvement and willingness to work objectively are important assets in personality building. By objectivity is meant looking at one's own behavior as others would view it, perhaps with the added knowledge that each individual possesses regarding his own problems. Objectivity brings realization of the need for adjustment and is thus a primary step in improvement. The more subtle forms of emotional immaturity involved in rationalization (see Chapter IV) are difficult to recognize and still more difficult to admit, even to ourselves. However, there are many otherwise normal individuals who find their lives unpleasant and their goals difficult to achieve because they fail to face reality, to gain an understanding of their problems, and to find a wholesome substitute for immature and wishful thinking.

### *Meeting Emotional Situations*

If we think of strong emotions as disorganized responses, it is easy to see that emotionally determined action should be inhibited until an appropriate response can be organized. An individual who finds that situations arise which cause him emotional disturbance must learn specific socially approved modes of adjustment. It is possible to establish new patterns of action that provide the sense of security which comes with adequate control of emotion. Rage, anger, and hatred are emotions that especially lose force if an immediate response is deferred. To "think it over" is a good plan; it will not interfere with pleasurable mild emotions but will prevent hasty acts that are often regretted. The old idea of counting to ten before acting in response to most emotions is a good one. It introduces the element of time into a situation, and if the expression of emotion is retarded for a short time it can usually be delayed until a wholesome substitute response is found. A hard game of tennis or some other

form of physical activity is helpful in getting it out of the system. Some individuals go home and take it out on the family or kick the dog around. Even though it may relieve the stress, such behavior is naturally not the technique recommended.

Recognition of the fact that one is quick to anger, prone to become easily hurt, or too sensitive to criticism will do much to eliminate the strain which would usually be felt when situations occur that call forth unsatisfactory responses. Additional aid is gained if through retrospection the particular early environment or circumstance can be found that originated the objectionable set.

The mental inventory should include an audit of the tendency to fear and to dread life situations. Each of us worries to some extent, but few ever meet one tenth or even one hundredth of the difficulties that imagination can conceive. If we are the clinging vine type, we should realize our tendency toward dependence, inventory our strong points, and attempt to attain proficiency in some special field of endeavor. The timid soul should practice not self-assertion, which may result in undesirable compensation, but unemotional and constructive ways of meeting situations which he has previously feared. The individual who fears meeting people should plan a response when introduced and then seek to meet the same people under favorable circumstances. First a plan, and then practice under pleasant conditions will build confidence and new sets.

An admission that one exhibits the spoiled-child type of behavior is perhaps the most difficult part of its eradication. An analysis of our behavior for the purpose of determining how often we have insisted on our own way and to what extent we are self-centered will often shock and sometimes benefit us. The avenue to improvement is an examination of every decision involving other people to see if our own comfort, prejudices, preferences, or desires are dictating the decisions. The practice of considering the wishes and desires of other individuals first will go far toward enabling one to be more selfless.

### *Sublimation of the Sex Drive*

Mention has already been made of sublimation of the sex drive. We should perhaps add that individuals who read sexy literature and who think constantly of sex matters are likely to



find it difficult to make an adjustment. If one strives to find and to cultivate an interest which is entirely aside from sex, at the same time refraining from engaging in practices which excite sex emotions, much can be done to redirect that energy. The value of physical activities cannot be too strongly stressed. Furthermore, youth is the time when we should learn to play, not only the big muscle games like football, but games such as golf and handball, which we can enjoy throughout life. Every one should learn to play at least one game that can be enjoyed over a period of years.

The difficulties encountered in marriage will usually be diminished in proportion to the extent that personality development has been attained. As previously mentioned, a selfless attitude is a prime requisite. One additional factor which often interferes with the success of marriage is the attitude of the bread winner that he should dominate the partnership. The increased earning power of women and their contribution to the family income have, however, somewhat ameliorated this problem. Another frequent cause of conflict in the home is the lack of recognition on the part of the husband that homemaking is quite as difficult and a far more tedious task, particularly when there are children in the home, than earning the income, and that equality is the most stable basis for a happy home. Many of the problems of marriage cannot be discussed here but the types of conflicts arising in the home will be easily recognized as pitfalls to adjustment. The young man or woman who endeavors to recognize and eliminate emotionally immature thinking and conduct has made a distinct step toward building the kind of personality that will succeed in marriage.

### *How to Deal with Inferiority Complexes*

For those who are afflicted with inferiority complexes Dr. Paul Popenoe advises (1) 'recognize your disabilities,' (2) "overcome your disabilities if possible," (3) "if you can't overcome a handicap, act as if you did not have it," and (4) 'finally, develop your strong points. Find what you can do successfully and do it.'

All normal persons perhaps have a feeling of inferiority at times. It is well to remember, however, that individuals differ in special abilities as well as in native endowment. The musician may not be able to match phrases with a member of the

debate team, but can attain expression in another way. A feeling of inferiority can often be removed by an inventory of assets and the selection of a favorable field in which to concentrate effort and industry sufficiently to gain superiority.

### *The Superiority Complex*

The superiority complex is not so easily overcome. This attitude is often developed in childhood by overindulgence and by too much praise and attention. Persons thus afflicted may build an elaborate self-centered structure to support the idea that they excel. Since they lack the timidity of the inferiority complex type, their conduct is often offensive. Improvement in such instances involves the necessity of reducing the individual's ego. Life situations often tend to deflate self-esteem in an abrupt and even cruel way. Personality building is better served if the individuals concerned can recognize their difficulty without the shock caused by loss of status or position.

It is hard to relinquish that satisfying feeling that we are superior, and very difficult to learn to accept others on a basis of equality. Yet if we find ourselves losing friends, being shunned by people who mean something to us, and occasionally receiving subtle reminders that our actions are offensive, it might be well to consider our feeling of superiority. Our thinking must take into account the contributions which we have or have not made to those around us. Mere skill in some field of endeavor or ability to learn quickly is not proof of superiority. It is sometimes best to forget those whom we are able to surpass and to consider the tremendous number of individuals past and present, who have proved by their contributions to the welfare and needs of society that they are truly great.

### *A Summary*

No attempt has been made to discuss the physiological changes which accompany emotion. Our discussion has considered only social behavior in response to emotion. A summary of the means by which emotional maturity may be attained in a normal environment would include (1) attention to health and glandular balance, (2) an inventory of emotional habits, (3) the maintenance of an objective attitude, (4) an acceptance of reality,

ie, an acknowledgment that the world is what it is and not always what we would like it to be, (5) the sublimation of the sex urge where it cannot be acceptably satisfied, (6) an attempt to meet any sense of inferiority through the cultivation of some specific ability rather than through rationalization, (7) a check on any tendency to become egocentric, (8) a constructive plan of life based upon some worthy objective, and (9) coping with fears through (a) becoming better informed, (b) learning to relax, (c) unlearning childhood fears, (d) doing the thing one fears, and (e) substituting physical for mental action

It is wise to add that although complete emotional maturity is the goal toward which our efforts are directed, it is one that we seldom completely attain. The success of our efforts is measured not in attainment but by growth. Each advance step provides more serenity, better adjustment, and leads to that indefinite thing which we usually call happiness.

### *What Emotions Should Contribute to Adult Life*

Emotions as discussed should not be confused with feelings

'Feelings—much milder states of visceral stress—are obviously much less distracting in their influence and may be credited with providing personality with that affective tonus which makes life satisfying. But feeling, which colors experience and raises it above the plane of vegetative existence, must be contrasted in degree with true emotion which tends to obscure foresight and encourage caprice' \*

We should not be wooden images in a world of vivid experiences and swift action. To take all the thrill out of the "big game," or to refuse to allow our emotions some scope within which to refresh us with a new sense of the value of life after some exhilarating experience, would be to make life drab indeed. A wholesome appreciation of literature, the beauties of art, music, the drama and nature, with enough emotion to add color to our attitudes, is a normal response of the well balanced personality. We cannot and should not be equally appreciative of everything. The presence of too much emotion is as undesirable in an individual as is its comparative absence. The proper emphasis in building personality is toward an adequate balance of emotional response.

\* Louis P. Thorpe, *Psychological Foundations of Personality* McGraw Hill Book Company, 1938, p. 236

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## IV PSYCHOLOGICAL DRUGS

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The world in which we live makes many demands upon the human personality. The personality in turn is so constructed that it must depend upon the world of material things and the people therein for satisfaction of its basic needs. How is the individual to adjust himself to his surroundings and adapt the environment to the requirements of his own nature under the thwarting conditions of modern life? In the present chapter we propose to study this issue. We shall endeavor to learn by what methods man relieves the many stresses and tensions caused by his efforts to get on in the world.

Our study may be said to develop most naturally by way of the following outline:

- I What Life Demands Set Up Stress?
  - II How Are Stresses Often Relieved?
  - III Should We Use Psychological Drugs?
  - IV What Are Doubtful Ways of Drugging Ourselves?
  - V How Can We Dispense with Psychological Drugs?
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## IV PSYCHOLOGICAL DRUGS

### I WHAT LIFE DEMANDS SET UP STRESS?

#### *Personality as an Energy System*

A modern way of viewing man's nature is to regard him as an energy system which responds to conditions in the environment as well as to the inner demands of the organism itself. On this basis all of man's behavior is brought about by stresses or tensions within his organism. These stresses, like water seeking its lowest level, seek satisfaction and adjustment. Thus they drive the individual to act, insofar as he is able to do so, in ways designed to satisfy the inner needs of the organism. When hunger, which is an elaborate physical tension, is present in the body, effort is usually made to find food. If one needs good grades in school to make sure of a recommendation to a much desired position, an inner stress is set up which drives the individual to work for the grades needed. Any form of distress or need causes a tension and tensions always demand reduction or satisfaction.

This energy idea will throw much light on the material presented in this chapter. Furthermore it does not regard the human personality as being mechanical. It suggests rather that all human effort is purposeful in that it is directed toward recognized goals. It is said that all action in the energy system of man takes place in the direction of desired objectives. A stress in the form of a desire to go to college arises and the individual strives toward the realization of this goal. The same would be true in the case of a great desire to become a foreign missionary. Man works toward the reduction of his tensions and the ultimate achievement of his purposes. He is continually spurred on by his tensions but since new needs and new desires are continually arising he never reaches a state of complete equilibrium. Indeed if he were to do so he would soon perish. We can see, then, that life is a process of reducing stresses. Life's demands set up these stresses and we are constantly called upon to do something to relieve them.

*Basic Needs as Stress Producers*

We may ask ourselves what is the nature of the demands that keep us in this state of tension. As we brought out in some detail in our first chapter, man is characterized by at least three basic needs. We are all so made that these needs must be met in a balanced way if we are to be reasonably well adjusted within ourselves and with our fellow men. The needs in question arise from the previously mentioned physical, egoistic, and social motives. These needs represent human nature at its source. Under no circumstances can they be permanently neglected if balanced personality is to be achieved.

This is another way of saying that the human personality is always under stress to satisfy its ever recurring needs. The moment we become too hot or too cold—for example, internal tensions arise which demand action aimed at relief. When we are humiliated or embarrassed, our sense of pride is thrown out of equilibrium. At once we seek ways and means of restoring a balance—that is, we do something to try to “save face.”

Here enter what we have called psychological drugs. They are face-saving devices. They enable the disturbed person to satisfy his inner tensions through what are known as escape mechanisms. The nature and the varying degrees of seriousness of these devices will become apparent as we proceed with our theme.

*Life Problems That Set Up Stress*

The second type of demand made on man raises a great many stresses. It is one which clearly has to do with his adjustments to the requirements of the world about him. Modern life is characterized by many economic necessities, social standards, educational requirements, and cross-currents of political influence. All of these areas of living are interrelated and constitute part of the environment to which man must adjust his nature. He must find self-expression and opportunities for social service in a complicated and changing social order. This is no small task and must of necessity raise many difficult questions of adjustment. These needed adjustments are the inescapable life demands that set up stress.

### *The Inevitability of Conflict and Thwarting*

That conditions will arise to which our natures will not adjust readily and which we cannot change seems inevitable. Thus we experience many tensions in our efforts to satisfy our needs and to reach our goals. We are sure to encounter many circumstances in which there is apparently no legitimate avenue to a satisfactory solution of our problems. This means that there will be a great deal of resorting to substitute satisfactions. Tensions are never quiet, they always seek a way of release. Here enter the psychological drugs or escapes which we propose to describe in this chapter. These drugs explain how man attempts to adjust himself to seemingly intolerable conditions. They are the checks and balances of human nature by means of which the personality preserves itself in our none-too-benign world.

## II HOW ARE STRESSES OFTEN RELIEVED?

There is another approach to an understanding of how our needs, as stresses, drive us to indulge in self protective actions. The approach in question hinges on the possibilities of making adjustments to those situations in life in which we are unhappy. We may, for example, suffer from poor health. Perhaps we find the marriage relation distressing. We may be unpopular and poorly adjusted socially. Possibly we dislike the work we are attempting to do. Or we may be out of harmony with the policies and beliefs of our church. In any or all of these instances we are under considerable strain. Something must be done about it if we are to obtain reasonable relief—that is, if we are to be happy. This is especially true if we are having difficulties with people who mean something to our welfare.

### *Ways of Relieving Stress*

There are three or a combination of three methods that can be used in solving such a state of affairs. *First*, we can take steps to change the conditions under which we must live. *Second*, we can leave a situation entirely. *Third*, there is the possibility of changing ourselves or our attitudes toward our problems enough to enable us to make the necessary adjustments. By any of these



methods we reduce the tension set up by the suppression of our fundamental wants

In some instances the changing of conditions is a simple matter, but very often this is difficult if not impossible to accomplish. If one is too cold he can often secure the desired warmth by merely turning on the heat. If he is too warm he can seek the shade or buy a cooling drink. The person who dislikes to climb stairs can rent a first floor apartment. If a writer is disturbed by too much noise, he can easily close the windows and put cotton in his ears. A worker who dislikes night work can often get his work changed to agree with his desired hours. In all these cases the tensions involved are substantially reduced.

### *Escape From Stress Through Flight*

The second, and an apparently promising avenue of escape from continual stress, is that of leaving the unpleasant situation. This can readily be done when we dislike an apartment, when a room is too stuffy, or when a ball game is boring us. We can just leave. Or, to put it in the vernacular, "call the whole thing off." A little thought on this question, however, will suffice to convince the reader that most unpleasant situations cannot be abandoned in this easy fashion. We cannot run away from our obligations, and certainly a majority of our problems represent obligations. In some instances, as in the case of the prisoner, we are detained by force. As one individual put it, "We may be held by a combination of force and public opinion, as is the soldier in the army or the sailor in the navy. We may be held by public opinion or religious training as in marriage. The wishes of our relatives and friends hold us when we undertake a college course or a job. We may also be held in an unsatisfactory situation by financial conditions. When we have an unpleasant job we cannot give it up lest we starve. We are held in various situations, then, by nature, by society, and by a combination of these forces."

It is clear that many stress producing situations can be neither changed nor abandoned. If one has married what appears to be the wrong person, he must sometimes stay by the marriage vows indefinitely. Due to the pressure of laws and social standards we must sit through dull lectures, go to school until we reach a specified age, and wear boiled shirts and tails on formal occa-

### *The Importance of Right Attitudes Toward Problems*

Just what this man is going to do in the face of such a problem is not as yet clear. His case illustrates the stress producing situations to which the human personality is sometimes heir. Ordinarily we find that conflicts of this sort tend to resolve themselves in one of two directions. The individual may resist complete prostration by resorting to malingerings (pretended illnesses), nervous symptoms, and emotional instability in general, or he may develop a new philosophy of life in the form of an attitude toward his problem that makes it tolerable to him. The escape methods or psychological drugs which he utilizes are designed to relieve his stresses. These stresses may be properly thought of as nature's corrective principles. Just when these are useful and under what circumstances they appear to be abnormal will come out as we proceed with our analysis.

### III SHOULD WE USE PSYCHOLOGICAL DRUGS?

We know that because of their stress producing nature all of man's basic needs drive him to activity in their behalf. But it is probably true that the ego drive, the desire for a feeling of personal worth, accounts for a majority of the forms of behavior that we are calling psychological drugs. All of us have enough pride to seek some self justification in circumstances involving failure or embarrassment. Thus we indulge in all sorts of excuses and explanations of our shortcomings. These are of course designed to deaden our feeling of inferiority. We use our excuses as checks and balances to soothe our feelings. We drug ourselves (through these excuses) against feelings of failure in order to make the conditions of life tolerable. We strive to save the day for our ego.

### *Psychological Drugs as Adjustment Processes*

The principal point that we desire to make about psychological drugging is that in moderation it is a perfectly natural and intelligent method of adjustment to the ego-thwarting situations of life. We all meet many trying situations which cannot be changed and from which we cannot flee. In many such instances the only intelligent thing to do is to adopt an attitude to-

ward conditions that makes them more endurable. Thus we lessen tendencies toward needless unhappiness. Just as in the physical realm, occasional mild drugging is not only necessary but desirable since it relieves needless pain.

Examples of the normal drugging process abound. The author who with high hopes sends articles or stories to nationally known magazines tells his friends about the ones that are accepted but is decidedly quiet about the larger number that are returned. Furthermore, he flatters himself that all would have been taken at a good price if the editors concerned really appreciated their worth or if he enjoyed as much 'pull' as other writers. If this is not enough, our friend drugs himself with thoughts of the many disappointments suffered by such luminaries as Booth Tarkington or Irvin S. Cobb before they succeeded. The student who has done poorly in an examination consoles himself that he had by chance studied the wrong things. He may 'reason' that he had too many other important things to which to attend or that the examination was unfair. The man who fails to land a job on which he had his heart set deludes himself and others into believing that the position was after all not the kind that he really wanted. Or perhaps he tries to convince himself that it would not have been suited to his temperament. Many a football player has saved his face by limping off the field after being signalled to the side lines because of an un intelligent move.

### *Reactions to Failure*

Embarrassment, as well as failure, raises its stresses which must be drugged into quietness. The embarrassed individual resorts to whatever forms of escape seem appropriate under the circumstances. He does everything possible to maintain his prestige in the eyes of his friends. Thus the cultured woman who makes a mistake in her choice of a dress or other garment explains that she was in too much of a hurry. The inference intended is, of course, that she is ordinarily very capable in matters of this sort. She seeks to drug her admirers into maintaining their respect for her judgment. She banishes her stresses and conserves her ego. In the same way the individual whose neighbor finds him in bed unusually late in the morning explains that he was out a bit late the night before or, perchance, that he is not feeling well. The

poor driver who causes a minor accident rises up in anger and announces to the assembled multitude that it was the other driver's fault. He advances numerous arguments in an effort to convince himself and others that he actually is capable. The husband who forgets to mail his wife's letter preserves his sense of personal worth by reasoning that he has too much to do to be expected to remember such things. When his wife is embarrassed by her failure to have his dinner ready for him, she in turn saves her self-respect by giving an account of all the afternoon disturbances that delayed her. Both husband and wife offer words instead of results. Both reduce their stresses and preserve their ego security by indulging in simple psychological escapes from embarrassment.

Even the uncomfortable results of ignorance are sometimes rendered endurable by the invention of supposed lessons that could not be secured in any other way. A friend of the author's recently boarded the wrong train in Europe because of lack of familiarity with the local language. However, in the face of a loss of both time and money, he maintained stoutly that it was a fine thing for him since it enabled him to see some new country. He further declared that it gave him the valuable experience of making new adjustments. He was apparently more apt at making excuses than he was at coping with the difficulties of travel in a foreign country. Some have gone so far in this simple form of self-deception as to contend that mistakes are beneficial in that they lead to the development of patience.

In technical accounts on the subject, the psychological drug which we have been illustrating is called *rationalization*. It is the ego-bolstering process by means of which we justify our inconsistent or improper actions. It is really a practical way of avoiding impending self-abasement. When it is used in moderation in the harmless ways described, it is considered a normal form of adjustment. The reader can see how effectively it resolves many of our inner tensions by saving the day for our ego.

### *Common Forms of Rationalization*

There are five special forms of rationalization that are very interesting to observe in the adjustments of most people. The first is the excuse-making form which we have been describing. It is known as *justification*.

A comical example of rationalization is given by Linton Wells in his account of a Royal Welsh Fusilier's reply to some banter about the American Revolution which he received from an American round the-world flyer in India. The Britisher's retort ran as follows:

'But I say, just what was the ruddy war between England and America? My word, I never heard of it!'

It really wasn't a war, laddie," a brother officer explained. "America was a colony then and objected to paying some taxes or something, so one of the Georges—I've forgotten which—sent some soldiers over to collect them. But before long he needed the soldiers for a war with France or somebody and brought 'em back home. Then he was so busy at home that he forgot about the colonies, and when he got around to thinking about them again he decided they weren't worth bothering about and told them they'd have to jolly well stand on their own feet from then on. The colonists objected to being kicked out of the Empire and fired on a few blighters at Bunker Hill or some place near Chicago and the King got mad and brought the rest of his troops home. Nothing to it, really!'

This is rationalization with a vengeance but it illustrates in a humorous way a face-saving type of psychological drug that is very common.

A second form, which comes from a story of a fox which supposedly condemned some luscious grapes that he greatly desired but could not reach, is called the *sour grapes* excuse. This form is well illustrated by the antics of the young man who, after failure to win the lady of his choice, declared that he did not want her anyway since beautiful women are usually dumb! "Besides," he said, "women are like street cars, there is another one along every few minutes." The sour grapes method, it can be seen, bolstered his hurt pride and enabled him to render the girl in question partly immune as a future object of his desires.

The third is the so-called *sweet lemon* variety of rationalization. It is in evidence when an article which has turned out to be a "lemon" is called desirable by its possessor because he does not want to admit his disappointment or misjudgment. A motorist, after raving about the wonders of a certain make of car

\* Linton Wells *Blood on the Moon* Houghton Mifflin Company 1937 pp. 212 213

may find that the one he purchased is far from being as described. Nevertheless, he stresses its good points to his friends. He got a lemon but defends himself by calling it sweet. He thus drugs his psychological stresses into a condition of temporary harmony.

A fourth form of rationalization is that by means of which the troubled individual blames others for his own shortcomings. Since by this process he "passes the buck" to someone or something outside himself, we call it *projecting*. The failing student blames the teacher. The small boy defends his fighting by insisting that his antagonist hit him first. The unsuccessful "pink" agitator blames the government or the social order for his sorry plight. The embarrassed musician glares at his instrument, especially if he is dependent upon strings or a reed. These and other blame-escaping methods illustrate the projection form of drugging. This method has helped many a frustrated person to avoid too serious self-abasement.

Our fifth type of rationalization or escape from stress is the one in which the individual finds satisfaction through *renunciation* of those things which he has failed to obtain or which he enjoys but considers worldly. Many, by renouncing the petty vices or pleasurable indulgences which they naturally enjoy, get along successfully without them. This is a common stress-reducing process in the lives of very conservative people. Some have gone so far as to renounce secular life entirely in favor of what they call the spiritual life. They have retired to the quietness of the convent or the monastery. Less spectacular examples are found in renunciation of wealth, cities, light reading, coffee, tobacco, jazz music, theaters, and marriage.

### *Seriousness of the Daydreaming Escape*

While we are on the subject of common ego-preserving types of behavior as indulged in by normal people, we should perhaps mention and describe briefly a few forms other than those included under the rationalization type. This is necessary since man has so many ways of drugging himself both harmlessly and harmfully. First, let us examine the *daydreaming* form of escape from loss of ego. By this well known method of adjustment the thwarted individual can leave the trials and tribulations of real life and find substitute satisfaction in the realm of dreams. The

hard pressed and financially destitute student can and frequently does picture himself in his reveries as being well established in his life work. He sees himself replete with honors and generally very affluent. He gains much temporary satisfaction from his excursion into the world of fancy. In the same way, the thwarted wife constructs an ideal home, the unhappy child pictures himself as a conquering hero, the frail youth makes of himself a world famous athlete, and the suffering pilgrim constructs for himself a wondrous castle in the heaven of theological promise. This is the revery type of stress reducing drug. It has much to commend it under certain circumstances and when utilized to a moderate degree it eases the hurts of life. But when used as a steady substitute for real action, as an escape from actual efforts to attack the problems of living, it is decidedly pernicious. It may lead to extreme introversion or possibly to the form of psychosis (insanity) called *dementia praecox*.

### *Adjustment Through Compensation*

A valuable process for balancing the inequalities of life is that commonly called *compensation*. As the name suggests, it enables individuals afflicted with defects and inferiorities to reduce their tensions by atoning in various ways for their deficiencies. The frail youth who seems destined to failure as an athlete can compensate for his disappointment by becoming a skillful musician. He can strive to become a professional man or a scholar. The homely girl may and often does develop those social graces and other personality qualities that guarantee social acceptance. The cripple may become a great inventor or an intellectual giant and thus relieve the handicap under which he started. A woman thwarted in marriage or motherhood may find substitute happiness in caring for needy children. These are typical ways in which the troubled life of thwarted people may be balanced.

The reader should be warned, however, that this form of escape lends itself readily to very undesirable action. It can take delinquent as well as socially desirable directions. It may be used too consistently as a substitute for true achievement. The failing pupil may develop tough ways in an effort to convince himself that he is capable. The neglected boy may become a gangster in his intense effort to attract attention to himself and his prowess. The very short man may adopt grand, conceited airs in

his efforts to atone for what Alfred Adler calls his "organ inferiority." In short, there is always danger that compensatory action, unless properly guided, will take crude or criminalistic directions. In their frenzy to escape from the stress of inferiority, many thwarted personalities turn to the extremes of crude living. Thus we are forced to conclude that only under certain conditions is compensation a desirable psychological drug. And, we should add, this is equally true in the case of the related method of *over-compensation* in which the individual strives against great odds to excel along the very line of his inferiority. President Theodore Roosevelt became a splendid physical specimen in spite of his childhood frailties. Demosthenes became a great orator in the very face of early speech defects. In the same way the rest of us may rise above apparently insurmountable handicaps. To do so, however, we must be careful not to abandon our moral standards as did the physical weakling who over-compensated by becoming one of the Southwest's most dangerous bandits.

### *Methods Used to Escape Inferiority Feelings*

Thus far we have been primarily concerned with the various ways in which reasonably well-adjusted people use the psychological drug method to ease the pathway of life. We have seen that when used in moderation and in reasonably ethical ways, such methods of dealing with the trials of life assist greatly in preserving one's sense of personal worth. We come now to a brief discussion of similar self-drugging methods as practiced by individuals who are suffering from more or less marked feelings of personal inferiority. Such people enjoy less practical success in life than do those with whom we have thus far been dealing. Thus they are motivated to go to greater lengths in satisfying their ego needs through self-deceptive methods. In their efforts to atone for vaguely recognized feelings of insufficiency, these individuals frequently indulge in somewhat ridiculous exhibitions of superiority which they hardly recognize. They become touchy, they pose, they brag, and they court publicity in an effort to bolster their threatened pride.

These people may originally have fallen into their present state by way of feelings of inferiority. Usually, however, they end up by developing a severe case of excessive ego; that is, of touchiness. As clinical psychologists well know, with people of



this kind any corrective measure must be concerned with reducing the ego demands. Bolstering the so-called inferiority complex is a secondary matter. Be these things as they may, we see how unstable and inefficient people attempt to atone for their weaknesses. Their drugging methods are numerous. We can illustrate these further by the use of a few examples here. In his book, *The Psychology of Dealing with People*, Dr. Wendell White has suggested that the methods used by many inferior personalities to convince themselves of their own importance tend to take the direction of touchiness and posing. Subtle methods of posing that are apparently designed to fool the rest of us include adopting unusually lofty goals, attempting to predict coming events, purporting to be inventing something, talking over the heads of others, boasting and flaunting oneself, and pretending to discount one's own ability.

Thus sensitive people give themselves away by resenting mild criticism, by getting over-excited in arguments, and by being unable to take a joke. They become offended at those who oppose them, and are quick to utter such remarks as "You can't tell me what to do," or "I won't take anything from you." Further more, sensitive people crave much applause, reserve the right to be frank in their remarks to others, and generally do what they do not want others to do to them. All these behavior forms are indicative of personality instability. They are more or less unwittingly practiced as a defense against further loss of ego satisfaction. They are excellent examples of psychological drugs. But the reader can see that these methods are more deceptive and harmful than those characteristic of better adjusted people. They bolster self respect temporarily but actually retard the chances of making better social adjustments. We would be inclined to say that these drugs are pernicious especially when those affected are unaware of their destructive nature. Such tactics certainly do not lead to legitimate popularity.

### *Examples of Psychological Posing*

Examples of posing are interesting and numerous. The individual who adopts lofty goals or ideals and who then does little by way of striving to attain them is deceiving himself and trying to impress the rest of us. As one psychologist put it to aim high may be merely an expression of abnormal conceit by

means of which we attempt to display our superiority over others. People who are always claiming to be weather prophets or forecasters of political, social, or religious events, are often weaklings who are trying by such a ruse to convince themselves and others of their importance. The same is true of those who masquerade as would be inventors. Both groups are seeking ego satisfaction, by the simple method of posing they reduce the inner stresses brought on by their lack of security. Through it all these individuals fail to see how their antics look to other, better adjusted personalities. They hide behind pompous pretensions, making the most of every chance success.

Perhaps the most common mode of self-conceit in this area is that of boasting or of assuming great importance. In this class are those who talk of themselves and of their own exploits continually. This type of pest is humorously illustrated by the famous Major Hoople of the comics. Such individuals frequently prefer to don conspicuous uniforms, bright badges, colorful clothes, novel mustaches and grand airs. They are much given to autograph hunting meeting movie stars or others among the "great," and telling people of their supposed famous ancestors. They greatly enjoy saving newspaper clippings and pictures of themselves and filling their homes with trappings suggestive of their prowess. Little do they realize that most of these activities are the normal and natural interests of adolescence. Except as hobbies, these interests at the adult level are usually indicative of faltering egos. Emotionally stable individuals with well balanced personalities have slight need for such immaturities. Except as occasional devices or hobbies substantial people indulge in them but little. They have their ego security in a combination of genuine accomplishments and social skills.

### *Reducing Stresses Through Ego-inflation*

Nevertheless ineffective people will probably always continue to resolve their stresses in the ways mentioned. These methods are productive of substitute adjustment. From a cause and effect point of view it is entirely natural for a personality lacking in the much desired feeling of personal worth to resort to pushing others around when the opportunity presents itself. The army sergeant who shouts orders to his disgusted men and the traffic officer who gets tough on the slightest provocation are display

ing the well known process of ego-inflation. The same may be said of the doctor who takes delight in ordering his nurses around and of the humble office worker who takes his spite out on his family. They are but trying to reduce their stresses. How much better it would be if these people could have realized a satisfactory balance of their life motives in their earlier days. If they had been taught how to secure satisfaction through real accomplishments and genuine contributions to society, we would not now be witnessing their tiresome drugging antics. They would not have been forced to drug themselves into artificial adjustment. They would now be capable of making their adjustments the legitimate way through a balance of egoistic and social living.

#### IV WHAT ARE DOUBTFUL WAYS OF DRUGGING OURSELVES?

##### *The Legitimate Use of Drugs*

In the physical realm it is generally considered intelligent to use drugs in moderation under certain circumstances. Drugs are legitimate and helpful in connection with the removal of teeth, they greatly ease the pains of childbirth, and in the case of surgical operations they are a godsend. When used to stultify the drunken man's intellect or to satisfy the cravings of the dope fiend they necessarily become a scourge. They give superficial relief for a time in that they deaden the senses of their victims against the ravages of deep-seated conflicts. In the end, however, they prevent appreciation of the finer things in life and the possibilities of improvement of the individual's personality. Just so is it in the psychological realm. Used with discrimination and moderation, psychological drugs oil the machinery of life. They make otherwise embarrassing situations tolerable. They make possible adjustment to distasteful circumstances which can not be changed and from which we cannot flee. The monotonous work, the unhappy marriage, the physical handicap, or the failure to attain to a given social station all become increasingly bearable when we adopt an attitude toward them that gives them value for the development of more sterling personality qualities.

When intelligently used by capable people who are adjusted to the practical areas of life and who are motivated by a sense of moral values, psychological drugs are without doubt a boon.

But when used by unstable, unscrupulous, or out-and-out neurotic people as a constant substitute for real achievement, they are as pernicious as the drink habit of the drunkard. Between these extremes psychological drugs may be used in more or less doubtful ways. We say doubtful because in some cases they may help to balance the life stresses of the individual at the same time that they prevent his working toward higher and finer ways of adjusting. We shall endeavor to show how this can be true with reference to such movements as religious cults, social security schemes, and pseudo-scientific character reading systems.

### *The Psychologist's Attitude Toward Cults*

In discussing the view that a scientifically trained psychologist would naturally take toward religious cults, we must remind the reader that the psychologist thinks purely in terms of a given individual's welfare. Although he may not and usually does not have any faith in the occult proposals of these systems, he recognizes that they have some values for unhappy people. Thus the psychologist divests himself of his personal prejudices and, as in the case of religious cults, endeavors to find just what such systems can do for troubled men and women. He is frank to say, however, that such values as do appear can frequently be had without belief in the mysterious elements which these cults contain. Nevertheless, the practical value of cults must be judged in terms of the attitude that a given individual has developed toward them. At least this is the starting point in any form of psychological help. As drugs, cultist religions have values, but from a broad adjustment point of view these values are frequently very limited.

It is not our purpose to elaborate on the internal nature or detailed beliefs of the systems to be mentioned. For our purposes they have much in common in that they generally depend for their value on the implicit faith of their adherents. And it is precisely in this faith that their value for health and happiness lies. But to the psychologist such faith is nothing more than a psychological attitude which operates according to the well known principle of auto-suggestion. Indeed, the kind of faith that we are discussing here is regarded as being merely a form of self-suggestion. The individual believes in powers and forces

which probably do not exist. His belief makes them seem real and at the same time secures for him the inner feeling that he has received the blessings which such forces might bestow if they actually did exist. This is, of course, a process of wishful thinking. It is an example of psychological drugging. It has more value for those who can believe the occult than has straightforward but less supernatural self-suggestion. Suggestion is, however, more effective in the case of those who disdain the mysteries of "spirits." Everything depends upon the attitude of the individual concerned.

Our analysis leads us, then, to evaluate cults—and we do not wish to use this term disrespectfully—as being of more or less doubtful worth. The exception to this conclusion would be the case of people who are not able to benefit from a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of adjustment processes. Furthermore, as we shall bring out more fully later, some cults place too heavy an emphasis upon self analysis. They are inclined to give excessive attention to the needs and wants of the self. Of one thing we feel reasonably sure—to the extent that cults do this they are inviting rather than relieving unhappiness. Conversely, to the extent that any system encourages generous action in favor of group activities it is bound to be valuable, irrespective of its mythical beliefs.

### *Popular Semi religious Systems*

It is in this light that we view such religious or semi religious systems as Unity, 'I Am,' Rosicrucianism, and the Oxford Movement. These may differ considerably in the extent to which they subscribe to occult beliefs. All of them, however, offer what they apparently believe to be superior motivation for living the satisfying life. Unity, with its emphasis upon contact with an Infinite Power for good, rests much of its case on the value of positive thinking and constructive statements to one's self. By thinking virtuous thoughts and through the repetition of impressive affirmations such as, 'God is my health, I can't be sick, God is my strength, unfailing and quick, God is my all, I know no fear, since God and love and truth are here,' the Unity believer attempts to attain the satisfying life. He has adjusted his philosophy of life to the conditions under which he must live. This is a happy psychological drug.

### *Shortcomings of Religious Cults*

To more scientifically minded people such a process involves at least three flaws. First and perhaps most serious for personality adjustment, the process is one of almost exclusive reflection about the self. From the mental hygiene angle we know that it had much better be a program of social action. This is a serious fault. Self-analysis encourages turning inward of the life energy. Clinical psychology has certainly shown how important it is that this energy be directed outward toward people, current events, community enterprises, and social action in general. Second, the affirmation process usually operates on a too limited view of the individual's detailed life adjustments. It tends to leave out of account just what he should do in the thousands of practical duties of his workaday life. No one is good or courageous or truthful in the abstract. What we call goodness, courage, and truthfulness are names for specific acts performed in equally specific life situations. Insofar as this principle is neglected in a system like Unity, the methods employed are likely to be pleasant failures. This is a fundamental point in psychology.

In the third place, non-religious systems can and have used the affirmation technique with as much success as the Unity people can claim. American, European, and Oriental cults have long emphasized the principle of influencing attitudes through the ardent repetition of affirmations. This is the principle which we recognize as the familiar one of auto-suggestion. Coué became famous for his "Every day in every way I am getting better and better." Others have advocated such a formula as "I am healthy, strong, and wise; nothing can prevent me from attaining to success, prosperity, and happiness." And so the suggestions go. Insofar as the individual is fully convinced of the value of this process, he gets such good as the auto-suggestion process can effect with such broad abstract statements. Such good results as do appear come from the positive, optimistic attitude which these thoughts generate. Mysterious notions of a great Abstract God principle need not enter the picture.

### *Oriental Systems and Self suggestion*

Oriental systems are most interesting if not wholly convincing. We will illustrate by one in which it is claimed that in our bodies

there is a place in the back of the neck known as the Crucifixion Center. In this center the negative and positive currents of the body are said to cross. This assumption may be utilized to get rid of bad habits, it is believed, by the following method: (1) Imagine a current of positive energy entering your body at the solar plexus and filling the right half of the body. (2) Imagine a current of negative energy entering the solar plexus and filling the left side of the body. (3) While holding the breath and tensing the body, send both currents to the 'crucifixion center,' with a positive suggestion to the subconscious mind that you are crucifying all bad habits and desires. It is said that this method will assist in the destruction of not only definite physical and psychological habits but of likes and dislikes as well. To the scientific person this is but another way of drugging with self suggestions.

### *The Psychology of Self suggestion*

So it goes for other systems based on the idea of regeneration through wishful thinking. The adherent is enthusiastic in his acceptance of the benefits to be gained; consequently he reaps the inner feelings which such an attitude creates. He gets particularly good results if he is afflicted with the type of nervous symptoms which are relieved by a constructive change of attitude. That a great many of the members of this and similar organizations are semi-nervous cases can hardly be gainsaid. A great many of these individuals are motivated by a quest for relief from personality disturbances. This may be all right but it does mean that such members are likely to be so absorbed with their own troubles that they are little concerned with what they can do by way of selfless service for other afflicted individuals. This is an undesirable situation and one likely to perpetuate the self-centeredness of those concerned. Even the self-suggestion principle of denial of bodily ailments is an in turn process designed to assist the self. Without cynicism we can thus say that from a clinical angle the practices of such systems represent drugging methods of both good and doubtful value. There are benefits to be gained. But these and infinitely more might be realized in a program based on more attention to social nurture and less on self-concern. As for other systems, the reader who cares to do so can evaluate each on the basis of its proposals. These proposals

he might judge in the light of the extent to which they lend themselves to a balanced realization of the complementary motives of life which we have been calling egoistic and social

### *Popular Character Reading Systems*

A second class of favorite American drugs of the psychological variety and one which has much less to commend it than the above is the well known group of unscientific character and personality reading systems. These include astrology, phrenology, physiognomy (character reading from anatomical features), chi rognomy (handwriting analysis), clairvoyance, spiritualism, palmistry, numerology, crystal gazing and such popular pastimes. These systems flourish because mankind seems to be very much attracted to the mysterious, the bizarre. The slow, relatively colorless, factual method of scientific research lacks appeal to those restless persons who feel in need of quick relief from their insecurity stresses. So these systems which promise much but deliver little find widespread acceptance as bases for important life decisions. Restless humanity must have its drugs and it apparently likes them to be occult, that is, beyond the reach of proof by the senses.

Astrologers claim that man's health and happiness are directly influenced by the planets and the stars. Yet in thousands of years they have been unable to prove their claims. An acquaintance of the author sent for horoscopes from a number of unusually prominent astrologers. He received from them very different suggestions concerning what he should do. Astrologers have been unable to use their alleged powers to find anything resembling fame and fortune for themselves.

Character reading through shape of the head and by means of color of hair, shape of nose, style of face, prominence of chin and the like has been thoroughly discredited by scientific research. Handwriting analysis has some basis in fact but is too flimsy to be relied upon for guidance in important matters. Clairvoyance has performed many remarkable tricks but its claim of supernatural knowledge has never been proved.

### *The Spiritualistic Delusion*

The spiritualistic claim that we can get in touch with the spirits of departed dead is accepted only by the credulous. That



the well known process of always taking the easy way out of obligations. It is the personality-destroying sin of babying the self. In answering the question of how we baby ourselves one psychologist suggested, 'By kicking our ball out of a difficult 'lie' or out of a trap when practicing golf, by letting a headache keep us away from work or other duties, by refusing to make an announcement because of self-consciousness, by resigning from the committee when a little work appears, by dropping the course of study when the interest wears off, by having special delicacies and reading matter when ill, by being cross when a little tired, by always taking the easy way, regardless of consequences.'

Most of us want to change others rather than ourselves. We spend our energies trying to remake the social order instead of reforming ourselves. We are more or less blind to our own weaknesses and content to delude ourselves that all our troubles reside in the nature of the requirements to which we must adjust. Yet some would have us believe that human life is directed primarily by intellectual considerations! Who is to blame when the immature adolescent comes into conflict with his more conventional parents? The latter, of course! And whom does the self-pampering student blame when he gets low grades in school? Certainly not himself. Likewise our sad financial plight is due to the policies of the political party in power. Our inability to enjoy more luxuries is laid at the door of the much maligned machine. We feel that our troubles would be over if we could but change the social order, especially in its economic aspects. This we believe, would be especially true if someone could devise a planned economy that would at once remove all our financial insecurity.

### *The Importance of Self reliance*

It is certainly true that most of us have financial troubles. It is equally true that there are some decided inequalities in our economic system. Yet who can deny that much of the complaining and a great deal of the failure that we witness all around us is due to the widespread habit of self pampering? Strong courageous personalities who are ethically sound and who are willing to do things the hard way if necessary, usually get along very well. In fact they have as a rule prospered materially. It would probably be fair to say that our social order would be far more equitable if the individual members comprising it had more of

the hardy, independent qualities of the pioneer, and less of the self pampering tendencies of those who are so prone to complain. Self babying is a pernicious drug and one that leads to personal and social unhappiness. We can hardly say too much in favor of self-sufficiency and those other strong qualities which make for a direct attack on the problems of life. Buck passing and the projection of our failures on others have little to commend them. They are often signs of grave personality weaknesses.

#### V HOW CAN WE DISPENSE WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL DRUGS?

##### *The Balanced Life*

We cannot emphasize too strongly the principle that the individual who adopts a positive view of life has little need for psychological opiates. It is possible to meet every stress producing situation with either appropriate action or a constructive philosophy of adjustment. If such a program is followed life becomes a fascinating game and reality can be faced with optimism. The well adjusted person orders his actions in harmony with socially acceptable codes, makes an ally of his intellectual powers, and endeavors to appreciate the finer things in life. By allowing his life energy to flow into channels of social living he secures the realization of his own needs.

Such a person works hard, plays hard and suffers defeat without complaint. He likes people, serves without undue thought of reward and identifies himself with social and educational causes. He who achieves the psychologically balanced life knows what it means to strive. He puts respect for personality above immediate reward. He uses the latter as a means to an end in helping to alleviate the world's woes. In short, such an individual is mature emotionally and adjusted socially. As one writer has put it "The people of abounding energy, those who rejoice at opportunity to work, the studious, the efficient, the courageous, the kindly, the foursquare, these are they who will know the joy of living in its fullest and its truest sense, these are they who will live 'The Abundant Life'."\*

\* Arthur F. Wiltse "The Abundant Life," *The Reader's Digest*, December 1937 p. 8

### *Contrasts with the Weak Personality*

The contrast is certainly striking. On one hand is the weakling who seeks to escape from responsibility. He projects his shortcomings on others. He pities and pampers himself. He talks about his rights and how much the world owes him. He lives a more or less shifty career. In short, he resorts to psychological drugs of varying degrees of potency in his efforts to allay the recurring stresses which the needs and frustrations of life present. On the other hand we have the more stalwart personality who attacks his problems with a view to their satisfactory and socially acceptable solution. His life energy turns out away from himself into channels of action for and with people. He uses psychological drugs with moderation and then in instances when due to the impossibility of changing or getting away honorably from conditions, action is largely prevented. He is not a buck passer and neither does he play to the gallery. He gets his satisfaction through constructive social living.

The import of these facts for the welfare of society seems evident. The psychological drug addict, if encouraged, reaches out for what he can get. He wants ordinances passed that will remove his need for improving himself. His more socialized brother does what he can by way of nurturing the race and vitalizes society with balanced living. Such an individual represents the hope of the future.

### *Personality Assets and Liabilities*

In summary it can be said that the weak personality is marked by certain psychological *liabilities* that should be minimized or corrected insofar as possible, and that the adjusted personality is characterized by certain mental health *assets* that might well be sought when not sufficiently present.

The liabilities in question may be listed as

- Behavioral immaturity (infantilisms)
- Emotional instability (neuroticism)
- Feelings of inadequacy (insecurity)
- Physical defects (effects on morale)
- Nervous manifestations (functional disorders)

The assets referred to may be said to include

- Close personal relationships (friendships, etc.)
- Inter personal skills (getting along with people)
- Social participation (group activities)
- Satisfying work and recreation (school, play, etc.)
- Outlook and goals (philosophy of life)\*

The individual unfortunate enough to be the victim of most or all of the mental health liabilities mentioned would do well to seek expression for his thwarted needs in such of the mental health asset areas as are available to him. He should be encouraged in realizing that the assets listed are avenues to the development of an adjusted personality and that they represent skills, attitudes, and relationships that can be acquired.

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## V. WHAT ABOUT INTROVERSION?

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When the relation of personality to life is discussed the question of introversion and its drawbacks is usually mentioned. Recent books have condemned what is called introverted living and have praised the opposite, *extroversion*, as though it were the last word in desirable personality. These developments have led many to wish to know more about introverted and extroverted forms of behavior as they affect adjustment to life. We shall address ourselves in this chapter to a study of the theories and facts relating to these contrasted temperaments. We shall discuss:

- I. Who Are the Introverts?
  - II. What Makes an Introvert?
  - III. What Is Wrong with an Introvert?
  - IV. What Should We Do about Introversion?
  - V. Must We All Be Extroverts?
-

gies flow out into the world of realities where he can find challenges for his courage and his optimism. According to those who have studied the matter extroverts are inclined to choose life callings which involve salesmanship, promotion work, politics, public life, and social ability.

### *Fallacies in the Type Idea*

Although this description has much to commend it and is in certain respects true, it is in error in taking for granted the existence of two so-called contrasted types of personalities. The scientific measurement movement in psychology has shown that people do not fall into separate groups or types. When a reasonably large number of people are tested by personality scales designed to measure introversion and extroversion, the scores will distribute themselves in a continuous bell-shaped curve which is known as the normal curve of probability. This occurs because most personality inventories of this kind involve the answering of yes-no or true-false to many test questions. Some of these questions are indicative of introversion and about an equal number of extroversion. When a given individual checks these questions he usually answers some in a way that makes him appear introverted and others in a way indicating extroverted tendencies.

This means that most individuals fall somewhere between the extremes of introversion and extroversion—they are not types but composites or mixtures. The only true types would be those who are found at the extreme ends of the curve. These are usually patients suffering from personality disorders.

We can say, however, that many people have personality traits that are more or less suggestive of the descriptions given at the beginning of our chapter. This means that the terms introvert and extrovert, in spite of their limitations, possess some usefulness in describing attitudes. These terms are also useful in administering guidance programs of one kind or another. So we shall use the term introvert as a matter of convenience, to designate people who are moderately or extremely self-centered, unsocial, and emotionally sensitive. We will not, however, be thinking of distinct types or of extreme cases. Likewise we shall use the word extrovert to mean persons who are as a rule friendly and socially active.

Nevertheless, for the most part it is true that the *emotional* introvert, being by nature self-centered, is usually sensitive and inclined to be inactive. He is prone to think about his own interests, and tends to be unmindful of social obligations. As one psychologist has put it, "The introvert or selfish person avoids the trouble of meeting people, the extrovert goes out of his way to meet them. The introvert evades the obligations and demands of clubs and committees, the extrovert accepts them. The introvert or selfish person may think of doing good deeds, the extrovert does them. The former has no time for the things he dislikes to do, the latter does them anyway. The former is afraid of making mistakes and embarrassing himself, therefore he risks no action. The extrovert may be afraid, too, but still acts and by his mistakes and sufferings ultimately achieves skill and confidence. . . Extroversion is the result of work, a life of practice. Introversion is the result of avoiding practice. The extrovert suffers more in the beginning. The introvert suffers more in the end."\*

## II WHAT MAKES AN INTROVERT?

### *How Introversion May Develop*

There are many combinations of experience in early life that may result in definite introvertive trends. We do not know in detail just what attitudes will result from given forms of early home treatment. But we see in a general way how certain forms of suppression lead to the inturned or self-centered processes of introversion. We shall mention a few of these and endeavor to illustrate them with cases that have come under our observation.

Introversion is in the making when parents deliberately develop in a child an excessive attachment or feeling of dependence. Repeated expressions of fear or uncertainty for the child's welfare by parents may encourage the child to look to them permanently for protection. Parents may further encourage such an attachment by excessive expressions of sympathy, concern, and affection. If the child then comes to invest the major part of his interest in one or both of his parents and permits their personalities to overshadow his individuality, he is in a fair way to

\* Henry C. Link, *The Return to Religion* The Macmillan Company, 1936, pp. 39, 49.

fail in the development of self-confidence and independence. He is likely to become a mere shadow of his parents. His need for a feeling of independent worth or self-sufficiency is being thwarted. Such thwarting is almost certain to lead to a reaction against being overshadowed continually by the parents. This reaction usually takes the form of the immature self-concern which we see in emotional introversion. It represents the child's effort to balance his egoistic and social motives by getting away from his too dependent existence. Due to the absence of friends and attachment with outside activities, he must get his ego recognition by turning his attention in upon himself, and the stage is set for emotional introversion.

One such child, usually docile and submissive, was so completely overshadowed by his parents and brothers and sisters that up to the time of middle life he had been able to find practically no outlet for his need for self-expression and independence. He was literally forced into the role of a Casper Milquetoast. In the end his thwarted personality could stand the strain no longer and he gradually slipped from chronic introversion into the form of insanity known as *dementia praecox*. In this condition he was at least free from the constant demands that had been made upon him. Today he is spending his entire time as a mental invalid concerned with his own interests. This is a violent reaction against an overdose of selfless submission. Most cases do not come to such a sorry pass, but this one illustrates the heavy stress under which the human personality labors when it is too severely thwarted in the drive for legitimate self recognition.

### *Examples of Harsh Domination*

Somewhat similar results are often seen when parents dominate a child by strict or harsh commands which deny the child ego recognition. The victim is usually found to be in a combined state of fear, anxiety and insecurity. Children living under such conditions are likely to become either morbidly introverted or decidedly antagonistic.

A case somewhat typical of the introverted outcome has been described briefly as follows. Boy, fifth of nine children. Pre-school period spent with nurse, brother and sister, and a few hand-picked children. All efforts to express himself or to make advances were discouraged. Taught to be seen and not heard.



this discord and the resulting havoc in the lives of his children, he left home. In spite of the feelings of guilt over this desertion our client was able to delude himself into believing that he was better off. However, he has now lost practically all of his self-confidence and is so sensitive that he cannot hold any kind of position. He has also contracted several nervous symptoms. In spite of his chip on the shoulder attitude, at times he cannot even leave his room. He has many earmarks of what is called *agoraphobia*—unreasonable fear of the outdoors. Finally, he is violently antagonistic toward anyone who crosses him or violates one of his ideals.

### *Results of Overindulgence of Children*

It should not be supposed that only dominated individuals become chronically self-centered. Experience has shown that overindulgence of children is about as serious in its effect upon personality balance as is too much restraint. Both represent frustration in the end. In one case the craving for self recognition is denied and in the other the capacity for recognizing the rights of others is undeveloped. We know that self-adjustment comes only through a sincere interest in people. Egoistic and social motives must supplement each other. These motives are complementary, not necessarily antagonistic. Recognition must be won, not demanded. Thus we see that excessive self reference leads also to failure so far as personality balance is concerned. The pampered individual arrives at a similar unhappy condition but by another route. The ego-centered life is the miscarried life no matter by what circumstances its energy became turned in on a starved ego.

An example of the results of excessive self indulgence may be seen from one of the cases in our files. As a girl this person was given practically everything she wanted. In time she became very stubborn (negativistic) and wilful when denied what she wanted. Having failed to learn consideration for others and to develop the social graces which normally lead to acceptance, she was blessed with very few friends. The failure of people to recognize her led to an aloofness on her part that increased the severity of her tensions, and she became more seclusive. Upon meeting a young man who took a fancy to her, she disregarded all advice and married him on the spur of the moment. Her

husband turned out to be reasonably considerate of her but she soon tired of him and sought a divorce. This outcome developed in the face of her family's strong opposition to separation on grounds other than of immorality. Following her divorce she became indifferent toward men and proceeded to satisfy as best she could her craving for comfort and luxury. Upon getting more insight into the folly of her ways she did succeed in making herself somewhat agreeable to a group of girls. However, she developed such a severe case of self-consciousness that she was in agony whenever she was called upon to meet new individuals either socially or in the course of her office work. It was for this affliction, and a case of hand contracture (stiffness), that she sought the services of a psychologist.

This case is fairly typical of the instances in which the self-centered, headstrong individual does about as he or she pleases in spite of the advice and thoughtfulness of friends. Through it we can see the error in over-indulgence of children. Without understanding what it is all about pampered youngsters come to consider themselves superior to others. They very naturally neglect to recognize the rights and privileges of their fellows. Unless conditions so shape themselves as ultimately to bring about a balance in this respect, the individual becomes more or less cut off by himself.

### *Introversion and Nervous Disorders*

Without being technical we should perhaps say a few words at this time about the way in which children may drift into that more extreme form of personality disturbance so closely related to introversion called *neurosis*. We have already indicated that neurosis is a form of personality disorder which the individual may contract when he is too severely thwarted in his search for satisfaction of life's basic needs. Neurosis arises it seems when the human personality finds itself under heavy stresses for which no legitimate outlet can be found. A child may find himself in an unhappy situation in a dull school, a proposed public appearance, or the necessity of doing a distasteful chore. Any one of these situations may produce in him considerable tension. The child sees that he can neither change, avoid, nor adjust satisfactorily to any one of them. He may by chance escape by becoming ill. He soon learns of course that a sick child is not ex-

pected to go to school, do chores, or appear in public. He can get out of his problem gracefully by being disabled. It is only a step from this discovery to the idea of saying or pretending that he has a stomach ache or a pain in his head, and he may become accustomed to escaping from obligations by pretending illness. This is the well known process of *malinger*ing. If indulged in too successfully by unhappy children, it may lead to various forms of neurosis. Malingering is not only an artificial way of avoiding a problem but is a pernicious and false form of adjustment.

Neurosis is not an invasion of the body by germs or infection. It is a *functional* (as contrasted with physical) disorder. It has several forms, most of which are associated with extreme introversion, but at least one of which is sometimes contracted by poorly adjusted extroverts. In *neurasthenia* the patient is usually characterized by a great deal of weakness and fatigue. He feels inferior and discouraged. He often complains of headaches, insomnia, eye strain, indigestion, and the like. In *psychasthenia* the individual is the victim of fears which lead to compulsions (automatic repetition of acts), and to obsessions (the uncontrollable repetition of unwelcome thoughts). *Phobias*, or abnormal fears of elevators, airplanes, high places, vacant lots, cracks in the sidewalk, policemen, and open spaces, are also likely to be present.

In *hysteria* the victim often loses the use of parts of his body. He may become temporarily blind, or lame, or paralyzed. He may lose his appetite or develop muscle twitchings called *tics*. During the war many emotionally unstable soldiers who were afraid to go over the top developed these functional disorders, thus saving themselves from both danger and the scorn of their comrades. When the war ended many of these men quickly became cured. Persons subject to hysteria are often extroverted in nature and frequently do not take their disabilities very seriously.

*Anxiety neurosis* is a condition of personality disorder in which the patient is practically always in a state of chronic worry or anxiety about his problems. He is a nervous individual who has failed to make strong attachments with enough people or varied interests to give him the feeling of security which he so much needs. Like other introverts he is full of inhibitions. There are so many things that he would like to do but cannot do.

*How Neurosis May Develop*

As in the case of the nervous soldiers mentioned above, the practice of pretending illness may lead to hysteria. It can lead to so-called nervous breakdowns as well as to other forms of nervous disorder. Escape from responsibilities through malingering is an exceedingly poor way to attempt to balance the emotional stresses of life. We could point to many cases in which clients have become invalids by this process. One young lady "solved" her problem by developing artificial (functional) stomach ulcers. Another client found sympathy by contracting a stiff neck. Other cases include muscle spasms, hand contractures (stiffness), eye strain, insomnia, backaches, and numerous other disorders of psychological origin which we shall mention in a later chapter. Neurotic symptoms have become so common that all medical men, particularly railroad doctors, who must be on the watch for false damage suits, are on the lookout for them. These symptoms represent the ultimate in miscarriages of human energy. Except for the more serious mental diseases called insanity (psychosis), these symptoms are the last word in psychological drugs. Their only advantage lies in the fact that they may in certain instances prevent the unbalanced personality from resorting to utter prostration or suicide.

## III. WHAT IS WRONG WITH AN INTROVERT?

*Why the Introvert Must Pamper Himself*

The principal source of the chronic introvert's unhappiness lies in the fact that there are so many things he cannot do. He has drugged himself into a passive state in which self-analysis and self-pity have become substitutes for social action. Never having developed the generous ways that make for social acceptance, he has been forced to find some other avenue of satisfaction for his need of ego-recognition. He turns his life energies in upon himself, seeking vainly to find relief from his unhappiness through imagined importance. He becomes a lone wolf, devoid of friends, and sensitive about his unpopularity. The reason for such unpopularity is perfectly clear to everyone but himself. His interests are so centered upon himself that he cannot

bear the thought of abandoning his self pity long enough to cater to the convenience of people about him. If he did so he might forget himself, thus losing the only source of ego satisfaction that he has been able to achieve.

The reader can see the process that has come to hold the unfortunate chronic introvert. He cannot leave the limited confines of his own self interest long enough to win the approval of others through generous recognition of their needs and interests. He is unable to be social because of his firmly entrenched self-pampering. He is forced to stay largely within the narrow limits of his own little world. It is the only source of ego satisfaction available to him. Being sensitive to his loss of personal approval the introvert develops, not an inferiority complex as so many suppose, but a sense of his own importance. Treatment takes the form of reducing the inflated ego rather than bolstering inferiority feelings.

It is easy to see why the confirmed introvert must delude himself concerning his real condition. It is also clear why he must drug himself with every known psychological device and relieve his tensions by excuse-making. Having few friends and being largely devoid of social skills he gets little true recognition from others. Since he is so concerned with trying to provide his own ego satisfaction, he cannot feel much like serving other members of the race. This state of affairs spells constant disappointment to the introvert. The result is, of course, unhappiness in the form of pent up inner tensions. This is the condition out of which nervous disorders in their various forms seem to arise most naturally. The victim usually has few, if any, avenues of escape, because of his previous failure to form strong attachments with the very interests, hobbies, skills, friends, and social organizations which would provide an outlet for his pent up needs.

### *Why the Introvert Has Few Friends*

This is the plight of the more extreme introvert. That there are many who fit this description is known only too well. These are the persons who most frequently present themselves for psychological aid. Their fears, worries, and general lack of efficiency drive them to the psychologist (or psychiatrist) for relief. They want to have friends but know nothing of the pleasure that comes from making personal contributions in behalf of friends.

They wish they were skillful and accomplished but have neither the patience nor the stamina to make the necessary effort. They are men of thought, of self-analysis, not of effort and action. However, it is by way of effort and action that socially desirable personalities are most naturally developed. This is not to say that introverts are devoid of all skills. It is rather to remind the reader that they are usually woefully deficient in social skills. They favor themselves and neglect others.

Introvertive people do not as a rule realize that the essence of social success lies in the simple principles of being altruistic, of liking people, and of devoting a reasonable amount of time and energy to others' interests. Many of the writer's clients have expressed great amazement at the popularity of certain individuals who appeared to them to be very ordinary people. They failed to see that the men and women in question had learned to submerge personal inclinations in favor of socially effective action. A program of self-expression, if balanced by a reasonable amount of attention to social obligations, is legitimate and necessary, but if it stands alone it leads inevitably to unhappiness. In short, the admired individuals were aggressive in making social contacts, they adjusted themselves frequently to the interests of various people, they made it a point to be sociable, to be friendly, and to indulge in a certain amount of humor. Above all, they made it a point to show an interest in the problems of their associates.

### *Why the Introvert is Unsociable*

Those who have made a study of markedly introvertive people of the emotionally unstable variety realize what a novel collection of checks and balances—psychological devices—these individuals use to avoid the pain of forgetting themselves. And pain it is. They have a hard time when confronted with social obligations. For example, when a deeply self-centered individual is asked to play some game like ping pong or bridge, he is likely to refuse on the grounds that he lacks skill or that he would rather watch the others. Being very sensitive about his ego he is actually trying to avoid embarrassment. His refusal, however, draws him farther away from possibilities of social adjustment and action. This is the way introvertive processes work, they

make their victim more and more unpopular, thus increasing his need for self-pampering.

Other instances illustrate the morale-destroying nature of self-sympathy. The emotional introvert is likely to refuse when called upon to assist in committee activities or in fund soliciting. He begs out of public performances, but gets critical when things are not done to suit him. He is quick to lose his temper when crossed and may brood over refusals to let him have his own way. Being introverted he feels that things should be done with reference to his convenience. He frequently makes the mistake of being brutally frank with people and thinks little of finding fault with the few friends he may have.

The reader can readily see what these things mean for personality adjustment. They prevent the development of desirable social qualities and thus contribute toward further loss of social security. Social recognition is denied because the individual does little or nothing to earn it. The satisfaction of social living is never felt because the ego-centered tendency stands in the way of its realization. Anyone who feels that the picture as thus far drawn is exaggerated should work with confirmed introverts for a while.

### *Examples of Introvertive Sensitiveness*

One young man of junior college age, in pouring out his troubles, disclosed such facts as these. He had no friends, no goals to live for, and no interest in social activities. He had no special skills and no hobbies. Furthermore, he belonged to no organizations, cared practically nothing about church matters, and was obsessed by a fatalistic philosophy of life. When asked what he was endeavoring to do about himself along the lines mentioned, he answered that he supposed the psychologist could take care of him. In other words, like the good introvert that he was, he proposed to be inactive while someone solved his problems. This reaction is quite typical. Naturally the young man was very much disappointed when informed that he would have to work out his own salvation in active ways and that he could only expect guidance and direction from the psychologist. How his case worked out will be indicated in a later section of the present chapter.

A middle-aged musician of our acquaintance was accustomed to pouring out wrath against anyone and everyone if he was not sufficiently applauded or flattered after a public performance. He would frequently corner anyone who would listen to him and proceed to deliver a tirade on the injustice of the people who neglected him. Their lack of appreciation of his art and the sacrifices he had made were favorite topics. All the world was out of step but himself; he was God's gift to the musically hungry! That this man was morbidly unhappy goes without saying. He had developed an abnormal superiority complex. When he finally lost his position he naturally blamed everyone but himself. Here we see the operation of self-pampering, emotional immaturity, escape from responsibility, and excessive egoism.

Another client, an intelligent woman in her late twenties, had grown up without developing the all-important active social skills. She had come to the place where she was not only friendless but actually afraid of people. Whenever she endeavored to meet people socially or to work with them vocationally, she lived in constant fear that they would say something uncomplimentary about her. The slightest word of disapproval plunged her into the depths of despair. She suffered this reaction in spite of the fact that she was well-groomed, had gone to college, and possessed considerable ability. However, she had made few if any substantial attachments with people, or social organizations, and had developed no athletic or aesthetic skills, hobbies, or other interests to which she could turn for security. Every effort to make outside connections now caused feelings of futility and inferiority. She felt confined in her own little world, a world which she found increasingly distasteful. She was not selfish in the grasping sense but was nevertheless a victim of the intumed or self-centered mode of life. She could escape from her cell only by very gradual degrees and this readjustment she has been endeavoring to make by transferring her energies from herself to social interests.

### *Introversion and Emotional Immaturity*

In bringing to a close our discussion of what is wrong with the confirmed introvert we can describe him in another way by saying that he is as a rule emotionally immature. He may be



grown up physically but in emotional control he is infantile, or at best adolescent. Under conditions of considerable strain he dissipates his energy into such channels as touchiness, crying, anger, worry, jealousy, and self-coddling. We all do this to some extent but the emotional introvert indulges excessively in such miscarriage of energy. A thoroughly stable person directs his energy toward the solution of his problems. If his business is showing a decline he does not spend energy worrying or crying; he acts intelligently and in harmony with the requirements of the facts before him. The stable man expects a certain amount of disappointment and takes it on the chin if nothing can be done about it.

The emotionally immature individual wastes his energy. When things do not turn out as he had planned the introvert will likely as not seek solitude and let feelings of misery drain his energies. He resorts to childish responses. Bad news is his stimulus for brooding and good news may cause him to jump wildly or sing. The intensity of these responses will vary with the degree of instability of the person involved, but the introvert is inclined to criticise when opposed, scold when neglected and storm when he misses a train. In accordance with the developing American custom he sounds his horn nervously even when the motorist in front of him finds it impossible to get out of his way. All these reactions are signs of emotional immaturity.

#### IV WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT INTROVERSION?

##### *Why Introverts Cannot Cure Themselves*

Insomuch as we are devoting our entire next chapter to the question of personality improvement we shall content ourselves here with a broad sketch of what is known about dealing with confirmed introversion. Since so much has been said about the shortcomings of introverts it seems logical that such a presentation should be made at this point. It should serve to clarify further the nature of introversion as a personality affliction.

In the first place it must be recognized that marked introversion represents a tendency of long standing to turn one's life energy inward. It is by no means easy to reverse the direction of interest so that attention is focused upon external objects, things

events, and people. If the individual were able to make this reversal he would not be an introvert. If he could readily seek companionship, mix with people, join clubs, and win popularity, he would by definition be more or less of an extrovert. At least he would be a composite of introvertive and extrovertive tendencies, sometimes called *ambivert*. The fact is that the confirmed introvert cannot do these things no matter how much he reads best seller books on how to be popular. In his condition even to try often causes actual psychological pain. Thus the question of complete self-help must be approached with reservations.

As we have already said, introvertive tendencies exist in varying degrees of intensity. Many who are only slightly or moderately afflicted can make decided changes for the better by gaining insight into the inadequacies of their philosophy of life or of their ways of behaving socially, or both. They can, for example, learn to direct conversations toward the accomplishments of others. They can discommode themselves by playing games which others prefer but which they do not like. Extrovertive people who have allowed themselves to become unduly conceited or boorish can profit greatly by the same procedure.

When we come to the pronounced emotional introverts the problem takes on a different complexion. These people cannot, as some thoughtlessly suppose, reverse their deeply ingrained self reference attitudes by taking thought or by reading popular books on psychology. As a matter of fact many of them find in such reading negative suggestions which provide new imaginary afflictions which they had never thought of before. As an example, discussion of the inferiority complex has probably produced more feelings of insecurity than it has assisted in relieving. The same may be said of infantile sexual repression and of self-analysis. Those who sit and think of their troubles and repressions usually find more and more of them. These are decided handicaps to self-help in chronic cases. Such cases need action, not thought. Because of the nature of the affliction they often require the services of a competent professional consultant.

### *How the Psychologist Helps Introverts*

There are a number of treatment methods for assisting patients in ridding themselves of introvertive handicaps. In the main, two lines of procedure have proved most effective. The first has

to do with the individual's outlook or philosophy of life. This is as a rule decidedly at variance with the conditions under which he must live. He is self-centered, anxious for sympathy, full of fear, very self-conscious and sensitive. Success in his environment however demands courage, interest in people, an attitude of security and some social skills. The discrepancy between these factors has served to draw him farther and farther away from normality. Thus it becomes the psychologist's task to assist the individual in changing his attitude toward life.

Before the patient can actually begin to work out his own improvement which he must of course do in the end, he needs the impetus that the trained psychologist should be able to give him. This start the psychologist provides by teaching him to relax physiologically and psychologically. Through constructive suggestions given under conditions of thorough relaxation the patient is led to adopt a *more optimistic, emotionally stable outlook on life*. His unconscious resistance against giving up the symptoms which have won sympathy or freedom from obligations is gradually broken down. He is taught to realize the value of a desire to mingle with people, to serve them and to make contributions to the common enterprises of the community.

### *The Importance of Socialized Actions*

This accomplished, the second and more important step is that of mapping out a program of social acts for the client to follow. Such a program must start with easy assignments, none of which will cause too much pain. The reason for this provision is that sudden insistence on major social acts may cause the introvert to become further conditioned against them. He must start with simple personality exercises and gradually build up his assurance *to the place where he can feel secure in his new found adjustment program*. He might begin with say sending a birthday card to an acquaintance or by tipping a waiter. This start can lead to conversing with a street-car conductor or perhaps to taking a little criticism objectively (unemotionally). The process then goes on and on leading gradually to the development of various social skills. The important thing is that the introvert must work his own way out of his condition. This end he accomplishes by the active doing of a great many definite personality exercises. There is no substitute for actual practice.

We could cite a number of persons who followed this very procedure with considerable success. It was not easy to do and there were many setbacks. In the end, however, perseverance brought success. An extremely self-conscious young mechanic pulled himself out of a condition in which he could neither talk to his customers nor bear to have them watch him at his work, to being able to converse freely and even contribute to the humor of situations. A similar story attaches to a shipping room clerk who had lost several chances for promotion because of his timidity and sensitiveness. By doing the graduated personality exercises laid out for him, he improved himself so much that he was chosen to manage a small branch established by his company.

The active program is designed to get the introvert to forget himself and to submerge his personal inclinations. He is taught to do the things calculated to be of most help to the group in which he moves. An effort is made to turn self-centeredness into a reasonable socialness, and to show the introvert that happiness for himself as well as for his fellows comes through generosity toward people. Instead of being exhausted in emotional outbursts, the individual's energy turns into avenues of cooperative action. Instead of always doing what his sensitive intuned nature dictates, he gradually learns to do what his friends and acquaintances have a right to expect of him. Instead of accepting defeat and drugging himself into submission the introvert comes to attack the situations which life presents with a view to their positive solutions. In place of hiding behind excuses for avoiding people, he tries his hand at becoming skillful in games, hobbies and social affairs. As he gains confidence the introvert resorts less to psychological drugs and evasions, and indulges more and more in active expenditures of his energy.

### *How a Chronic Case Helped Himself*

In harmony with the principle of attacking the situations which life presents, the morbid young man whom we mentioned previously in this chapter was taught to give his friends a helping hand in various phases of their activities. He gradually learned to seek out and perform social tasks and to spend some of his time contributing to the fun of one or more persons at such school socials and dances as he attended. He was advised to attend his church with a view to mingling with people and to

take note of the reactions that he got from such a program. He was dubious at first but after a slow start finally admitted that one of the most interesting evenings he had had in years was one during which he forced himself to dance at length with a homely girl whom everyone else avoided. When he learned to go places for the purpose of contributing something and without, as formerly, so much thought of what he was going to get out of the affair, he really had a good time. His introversion began to fade. He experienced the thrill of escaping from the narrow rut of his ego-centered life.

The program suggested for relieving the worst aspects of introversion will lead the individual toward intelligent self regulation and toward the attitudes and moral standards known to be conducive to a stable life. An activity program of this sort seems to be at least a partial antidote for crude standards of behavior. It harmonizes with the principles of practical religion which are generally admitted to be productive of social welfare. It advocates the kind of life in which the individual mingles with people, enjoys himself at social gatherings, talks freely to friends and strangers, spends his energies in doing things for and with his associates and otherwise conducts himself as a good extrovert. This plan of personality building might well be entered upon by anyone who is looking for an avenue to better adjustment.

#### V MUST WE ALL BE EXTROVERTS?

From what has been said it may be inferred that we think everyone should be extrovertive. From the clinical angle it is better to be markedly extrovertive than markedly introvertive, but it must be remembered that most people are neither very extrovertive nor very introvertive. They are composites possessing some of the elements of both tendencies. People cannot be classified into two or three types. There are various degrees and patterns of extroversion and introversion. Many individuals are only slightly or moderately introvertive. They are merely quiet in their ways and perhaps intellectual in outlook. Such persons may be and often are adjusted and quietly sociable when the occasion demands social intercourse. Intelligent individuals of this kind have rightfully objected to being considered inferior.

because they could be labeled as introvertive. Not only is introversion not a fixed type in some of its aspects it is not necessarily a disadvantage.

Nevertheless there are extreme degrees and emotional patterns of introversion that represent serious personality disorders. Some of these disorders weigh heavily against the chances of a satisfactory adjustment to the requirements of a well-ordered life. The evidence for this observation is overwhelming. These are the aspects of introversion that we have been decrying in this chapter. They include the life patterns in which the individual is either excessively self-centered, egoistic and devoid of a social outlook, or unduly fearful, cynical and unstable emotionally. Various persons may represent varying combinations of these traits. People in these groups may be regarded as being unadjusted and are inferior socially to extroverts of like degree.

On the other hand it must be realized that there are also varying patterns and degrees of extroversion. Those who are noticeably but not excessively extrovertive are as a rule the best adjusted persons in our society. The claims of publicity seekers that they are glad they are neurotics or that neurosis and genius go hand in hand in no sense disprove this statement. Such claims have too great an element of self justification in them to be taken very seriously.

### *Possible Disadvantages of Extroversion*

It must be admitted that extroversion is not always synonymous with good personality. Some extroverts are excessively bold. Their temerity and crudities do violence to accepted standards of social culture. Others are decidedly egoistic and serene in their own importance. They may try to tell everyone else what to do while resisting any suggestions for their own improvement. We have encountered such individuals even in the highly respected callings of teaching and medicine. Some who are definitely extrovertive on the basis of measurement standards can give the best of introverts a run for their money when it comes to talking about themselves. These extroverts frequently have too many scattered interests. They lack poise and organization. Finally, as all psychologists know, extroverts can and sometimes do become definitely neurotic. When this occurs they tend to contract types of disability involving the loss of

bodily functions These disabilities may include such hysterical disorders as paralysis, functional blindness and deafness, anaesthesia (loss or absence of sensations), and amnesia (loss of memory)

We cannot conclude, therefore, that extroverts have all the advantages in personality What we can say is that moderate extroversion is to be preferred to introversion in general The reasons for this conclusion have occupied our attention throughout the present chapter

### *Advantages of Moderate Extroversion*

On the whole it can be said that moderate and properly reared extroverts tend to exemplify the traits that are usually associated with desirable personality Moderate extroverts usually have a social outlook, they are inclined to consider the welfare of their fellows Their motives are social as well as egoistic They are ordinarily willing to follow the dictates of moral consideration even to the extent of submerging immediate desires Extroverts are by no means always or even usually paragons of virtue But their lives tend to be directed toward the balanced program we have been describing They tend to give as well as to receive recognition They are inclined to meet their social obligations at the same time that they drive on for personal success

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## VI CARVING OUT A PERSONALITY

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Everyone has heard and many have been inclined to believe that personality is some mysterious quality that is bestowed or denied by the processes of biological inheritance. This may be partially so but modern evidence is, in the main, contrary to such a belief. We now realize that personality must be judged largely in terms of what an individual does and says, how he acts toward other people, and how he adjusts himself to the problems of life.

This improvement in our knowledge regarding the nature of personality has led to the significant realization that good personality qualities can be acquired. Indeed, we have come to see that those who are so fortunate as to possess such qualities learned them through natural processes. How all of us, if sufficiently interested, can follow a process of personal improvement is the theme of this chapter. The following questions indicate the phases we shall consider.

- I How Can One Carve Out a Personality?
  - II What Are the Qualities That We Want?
  - III *What Skills Lead to Personality Improvement?*
  - IV What Can Working at Extroversion Do for Us?
  - V How Do We Know Our Plan Will Work?
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## VI CARVING OUT A PERSONALITY

### I HOW CAN ONE CARVE OUT A PERSONALITY?

When one considers the complexity of human personality he is led to realize that it is probably best not to attempt to compress it into a short definition. But we can think of and study personality in a practical way. We can observe and measure its attitudes and its actions. We need no longer be obsessed by the idea that personality is some mysterious force with which a chosen few are endowed by the gods. The human individual is a behaving organism and his acts can be judged in terms of their social effectiveness as well as intellectual status or vocational efficiency. Thus we have rightfully come to evaluate a person's personality on the basis of the skill with which he carries on his human relations. Even in his unspeaking and apparently inactive moments a man's minor movements give unmistakable evidence of his social poise. As we shall attempt to show in this writing even the idea of personal charm need have no mystery. It too, may be based on a variety of action patterns and on demonstrated attitudes toward social requirements.

#### *Personality as Social Effectiveness*

In this sense, then, personality has reference to what one *does* in relation to people and to obligations. It is a name for personal dispositions necessary to getting on in a social world. It is not an index of what one knows or believes. These are functions of the intellect. Although in a broad sense the total personality includes what we commonly call man's intellect in the sense of social effectiveness with which we are primarily interested here it is definite action that counts. Furthermore unlike the IQ (intelligence quotient) which represents a sum of intellectual abilities, personality is primarily a balance among a great many action traits. One cannot think of personality in the abstract. The idea of personality is only understandable in connection with concrete living situations involving social behavior. This is why biological inheritance has little to do with personality.

Certainly we do not inherit our actions or our psychological attitudes toward social conditions

The reader should recognize that heredity has long been used as an excuse for neglecting conditions that shape human personality. When our own inefficiency results in the development of unwanted qualities in our children or pupils, we side-step the issue by ascribing the causes to heredity. It would be better to study the factors that make for success or failure in developing a desirable personality. Fatalistic beliefs encourage inaction.

### *Importance of Satisfying Basic Needs*

In order to indicate further the active nature of personality as we see it, we should recall the energy view of the human being. Man may be thought of, in part at least, as an energy system in which marked stresses are felt when too much thwarting is encountered. The real suppressions are those which occur when fundamental motives are denied expression. We are under greatest tension when our bodily needs are thwarted, when our egos fail to receive reasonable recognition, and when the satisfaction resulting from contributing to the needs of other individuals is absent. We know, then, what we must do to keep our personalities in balance.

In our earliest days and before we know what life is all about we are dependent for personal security upon parents or their equivalent. If they give us security through love and affection, while at the same time teaching us to have due regard for the welfare and security of others, well and good, we have the right start. The details of how this is done may be learned from standard treatises on child psychology. If however we get a wrong (unbalanced) start, we labor under a handicap which we may or may not overcome. Assuming a moderately good start we eventually come to the place where we must keep our own personality systems in balance. This must be done by letting our energy flow out in the form of actions which influence other people favorably. Such a program leads to a desirable response from others with its attendant satisfaction to our ego motive.

### *The True Avenue to Security*

Perhaps this helps to explain the old adage, 'He who seeks happiness directly seldom finds it.' It may suggest as well the

origin of the golden rule and other happiness recipes. It certainly gives a tangible clue as to how to carve out a personality. We know that we cannot build a life by living unto ourselves. Living in this fashion means a misdirection of energy with unresolved tensions in consequence. It is the out turn of one's interests to people, events, and affairs that satisfies the requirements of a full life, that leads to personality growth, and that keeps us in a state of reasonable balance.

When energy has no opportunity to drain off in the form of satisfying social adjustments, the result is a damming up of unused energy within the organism. Introversion and neuroticism are, in the main, the result of this in-grown energy.

### *How Personality Qualities Can Be Acquired*

Desirable personality qualities can be acquired. All reasonably normal individuals can, if they have sufficient incentive, learn the social skills that give proper direction to energy and that satisfy the deeper needs of life. As we go on to point out the definite actions and attitudes necessary to a wholesome personality it will become increasingly apparent that one can continue indefinitely to improve personality. The only specification is that the skills to be acquired be approached under conditions that satisfy the requirements of a true learning situation. These are (1) a clearly discerned *goal*, (2) a strong *incentive* to achieve the goal, (3) a definite *understanding* of the requirements of the situation, (4) sufficient *maturity* to make learning possible, (5) some standard for indicating just *what progress is being made*, and (6) willingness to *work hard* and purposefully at the task.

Perhaps the operation of these points will be clearer if we illustrate their use, first, in connection with the learning of a common vocational skill such as typing and second, in connection with such a real personality skill as contributing to the social activities at a group gathering. Let us assume that in both cases the learner, while pretty much of a beginner, has enough courage and incentive to keep at his task until he becomes mature with respect to it, that is until he learns it. In the case of typing he must have a clear idea of what good typewritten material (goal) looks like, a real desire, based on practical need (incentive), to be able to type, a fairly clear idea (understanding) of how to go about operating the machine, sufficient age, strength,

and manual ability (maturity) to make progress possible with a machine; some way of knowing what success he is attaining (knowledge of progress, sometimes involving the presence of a teacher); and willingness to make intelligent changes in his responses on the typewriter until the skills he desires develop in accordance with his goal (application).

### *How to Develop Social Ability*

In learning to extrovert energy at an informal social function the learner proceeds in the same way. First, he constructs a clear visual picture of himself as acting sociably and jolly at the party (goal). Then he contemplates how much he needs and would like to make such an extrovertive contribution (incentive). Next he gets together the facts about himself in relation to the requirements of the particular party to which he is going (understanding). Following this he or his counselor makes sure that the social demands of the occasion are within his range of possibilities and not entirely beyond him (maturity). As a next step the learner, or his assistant, judges the skill or lack thereof of his performance in relation to the original goal set up (knowledge of progress made). Finally, the individual continues to go to parties, extroverting his actions and adjusting to new requirements until he becomes more and more skillful (application). Although such a program may be shortened in many instances and will usually be less formal than our account sounds, these are the requirements of a genuine learning situation. Persistence in a plan of action is sure to bring success.

### *Why Some Cannot Help Themselves*

There are many people both old and young who are too introvertive to attempt such a program. These individuals are too backward with respect to the needed skills to proceed except by the extremely careful and graduated scheme which we described in the last chapter. Due allowance must be made for their feebleness in personality building. They must have psychological help and guidance. Then there are outright neurotics who cannot even make a start under their own power. They must be given specific psychological advice to fit their cases. With them, personality rebuilding, if at all possible, will be slow and must

be guided carefully by the psychologist or psychiatrist. Such persons are the "have nots" in the personality field.

We should like to say at this point that it is most unfortunate that many teachers, lawyers, ministers, and medical men, are frequently so short-sighted as to slap such individuals on the shoulder with a robust "Forget it, son, it's all in your mind." To poorly adjusted individuals such a statement is unforgivably bad. In the first place their troubles are not in their minds, their entire personalities are usually permeated with emotional tensions. In the second place they cannot forget it. If they could they wouldn't have come for help. And, thirdly, such persons become increasingly discouraged when they find that they can not throw off an ailment which those who supposedly ought to know tell them is imaginary. It is very real to them.

However, exclusive of both the moderately and markedly disordered groups, there are thousands of relatively normal people who could and should work consistently at personality improvement. Most people realize full well what a high premium is placed upon fine personality qualities in business, industry, the professions, and indeed, in all walks of life. They know that a desirable personality spells success, that it is more to be sought than beauty, intelligence, degrees, and material things in general. Many argue that good personality was denied them by fate or that it is unimprovable after the age of sixteen. Apparently but few realize that they can carve out a finer, a more effective, personality at any age.

### *Why Some Will Not Work at Self-improvement*

Personality can be developed. Unfortunately many people lack incentive and willingness to work at such improvement. Ours is more or less a day of easy living, of aimless pleasure seeking, and of attempted shortcuts to fame and fortune. The will to strive, to deny present pleasures for future attainments of a high order and to pay the price for unqualified success appears to be a lost art. In a recent issue of *The Saturday Evening Post* a contributor, evidently well informed, decried the fact that our present crop of opera singers, particularly women, are for the most part amateurish. This is due, she believes, to their unwillingness to undergo the extreme rigors necessary in sound

musical training. She calls them underdone divas who have little idea of what their art is all about. So it is in the personality field. Thousands are anxious for the benefits of an attractive personality but few pay the price in prolonged vigorous effort. Entirely too many drift along in mediocrity. They would like to dance but are not willing to pay the piper. For personality improvement one must make thorough changes in both attitudes and behavior. Such changes take time but when pursued with clear goals, strong incentives, and eagerness to surmount all obstacles, a finer personality can be carved out.

## II WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES THAT WE WANT?

Before we can enter directly upon a discussion of active point by point personality development, we should determine as nearly as present standards will permit just what qualities and social skills we should endeavor to build. There are differences of opinion as to the exact characteristics of a desirable personality but psychologists are gradually coming to agree on most of the major elements involved. From their clinical practice they are learning what traits are associated with satisfactory adjustment and what combinations of traits make for unhappiness and lack of adjustment. On the basis of these findings psychologists have constructed personality inventories (tests) which are designed to measure in some detail the presence or absence of certain personality attributes. As a result of fairly extensive investigations utilizing these tests, we now know to some extent what qualities are possessed by happy, well-liked people. We also know to a considerable extent what negative qualities are possessed by undesirable individuals. This knowledge gives us a logical point of departure for outlining a program of personality building.

### *Evidence of Interest in Personality Improvement*

That college students and intelligent people in general are highly interested in the problem of personality improvement is indicated by a recent study carried out by Professor Floyd L. Ruch\* of the University of Southern California. This investigator asked one thousand college and university students who

\* Floyd L. Ruch, *Psychology and Life*, Scott, Foresman & Company, 1937, pp. v-vii.

had just finished the first course in psychology to select from 122 topics the ones which appealed most to their interests. Later one hundred college administrators and two hundred former students who had studied psychology ten years before were asked to rate the same 122 items in the order of their social value. The topics rated highest in interest by the students were also named by both educators and former students as being of most social value in life. One can see from the nature of the highest ranking items as listed below that all concerned were primarily interested in the improvement of character and personality.

- 1 Understanding one's own personality problems
- 2 How to improve one's own personality
- 3 Human motivation
- 4 The application of psychology to the training of children
- 5 The technique of reasoning out everyday problems
- 6 The problem of heredity versus environment
- 7 The development of character
- 8 The psychological factors in crime and delinquency
- 9 An understanding of mental disorders and insanity

This study is a new link in the chain of evidence indicating that people want desirable personality qualities because of their importance for success in life. The belief that intelligence is the factor of most worth is apparently erroneous. Abstract (test) intelligence is important indeed extremely important in making adjustments to the requirements of life. By comparison how ever personality or social intelligence seems to overshadow it when it comes to achieving the success that depends upon efficiency in dealing with people. And what kind of success does not depend upon such ability?

People in all walks of life are beginning to recognize the importance of social skills and are accordingly focusing attention upon such interests as those in the above list. They are learning that there is not always a high relationship between intelligence and the possession of an effective personality. One of society's present problems is to determine what to do about the fact that some pupils actually decline in personality qualities and social effectiveness while they are going through school and supposedly improving the intellect.

### *The Desirable Traits of Personality*

In an effort to summarize their findings relating to a truly desirable pattern of personality, psychologists have grouped trait actions into a few major aspects or phases of personality. These aspects are not, however, considered to be units. Rather they are more or less loosely-organized tendencies to act in certain ways. As we have said before, no one is consistently, let us say, extrovertive. One may be extrovertive in one situation or with a certain person and introvertive in another situation or in the presence of another person. Behavior varies, but certain of its forms can be grouped under broad trait names such, for example, as self-sufficiency, extroversion, social dominance, and emotional stability. It has become the style in psychology to regard individuals who possess a balanced blend of these four or similar qualities as having desirable personalities. These balanced persons may differ greatly in the details of their personality patterns (traits) but if their actions are to a reasonable extent self-sufficient, extrovertive, dominant, and emotionally stable they are regarded as having the qualities that are desired.

#### *Description of Personality Traits*

Briefly, self-sufficiency refers to the tendency of an individual to believe strongly in his own ideas and opinions, to stand by his decisions, to get along without much advice or encouragement, and to be generally independent. Social dominance may be thought of as the ability to influence the behavior of others in face-to-face situations. The dominant individual buys only what he wants to buy, talks up in public when he so desires, and manages to control his business, his family, and his environment. Others cannot push him around. The emotionally stable individual is mature socially; that is, he lets his energy flow out actively in the direct solution of his problems. He has poise and control under practically all conditions. Negatively, he avoids giving vent to in-grown emotions, swearing, crying, pouting, and self pampering. The stable person is neither jealous, suspicious, critical, sensitive, repressed, nor fearful. Generally speaking, he is physically and psychologically relaxed, and replete with energy.

The broad traits under discussion must be possessed in balance



or blend, and not just in amount. Too much self-sufficiency is about as bad as too little, it leads to tyranny and aloofness. Too much extroversion often means boldness, crudeness, and superficiality. Excessive dominance can become racketeering or abuse. We do not wish to be so stable that we lack sensitivity and appreciation for the finer things of life. The quest is for a workable blend of many desirable tendencies to behave in adjustive ways under given conditions.

### *The Qualities of a Good Personality*

One psychologist has suggested a summary of the balanced personality that comes so near exemplifying the description above that we can perhaps do no better than present it with some modifications at this point. It is expressed in the form of questions, all of which will be answered affirmatively by the adjusted personality.

#### FACTORS IN A BALANCED PERSONALITY

- 1 Is your physical health good? Are you free from physical conditions that are unpleasant to other people, or which sap your energy, or upset you? Do you feel fine most of the time? Have you plenty of physical energy?
- 2 Do you use your intelligence well? Can you sustain your interests? Do you remember people's names? Do you make intelligent adjustments to your problems?
- 3 Are you extrovertive? Do you like to be with people just for the sake of being with them? Do you like to join clubs and other social organizations? Do you like to lead an active life with other people?
- 4 Do you enjoy logical balance between submission and dominance, so that you do not let people walk over you, and yet you do not dominate others unduly?
- 5 Are you self-sufficient? Can you direct your own activities? Have you confidence in yourself? Do you believe in yourself and your abilities without being conceited?
- 6 Have you grown up emotionally? Have you put away childish emotional reactions such as crying, throwing things around, shouting, scolding, swearing and temper tantrums?
- 7 Do you make the right adjustments to your feelings of inadequacy? Do you have abilities and skills which you recognize as valuable and which show your superiority in those fields at

- least? Do you feel that, in a general way, you are as good as the next fellow?
- 8 Are you poised and relaxed? Have you gotten rid of nervousness and bodily tensions? Do your hands and feet remain quiet while you are talking to people? Are you at peace psychologically?
  - 9 Have you learned to avoid worry? Are you free from fears, such as fear of the future, or fear of particular situations, such as open places, small enclosed places, high places, or bodies of water?
  - 10 Are you fair and open minded with people? Can you discuss all subjects without prejudice? Are you willing to let the other fellow have his own beliefs and ideas, without trying to change him? Do you avoid unnecessary arguments?
  - 11 Is your thought content wholesome? Do you think wholesome and optimistic thoughts instead of pessimistic ones? Do you see the good points in others rather than their faults? Are your thoughts more on goals, service, success, and accomplishment?
  - 12 Is your social behavior satisfactory? Are you considered a good sport? Do you enter into the spirit of a party or meeting and do your part? Are you at ease socially? Do you avoid criticizing others? Are you courteous and polite? Do you usually consider the other person's point of view?
  - 13 Have you formulated definite goals to strive for? Do you do the things that are in line with your main goal? Are your activities such as to maintain the integrity of your personality? \*

### *Desirable Personality Traits in Youth*

Of much interest is a recent scale for measuring the personality traits of youth from ages ten to eighteen devised by Dr. Henry C. Link and his associates †. It differs from most other tests of its kind in that it is concerned with attributes of children and youth, and with the measurement of social skills and habits of self-control. As his writings indicate, Dr. Link is interested in the development of young people who are characterized by social habits and a maximum of self-determination. To him extroversion, broadly conceived, appears to represent the core of good personality.

The trait groupings measured by his scale run as follows

\* Adapted from an unpublished manuscript by Dr. Wm. S. Casselberry.

† Henry C. Link and others, *Inventory of Activities and Interests*. The Psychological Corporation (New York), 1936.

*Extroversion*—Defined as habits of giving attention to the interests of other people, of being unselfish in dealing with them, and of developing a broad repertoire of social skills

*Social Ascendancy*—The disposition to be aggressive in dealing with people and to take the initiative in meeting them

*Self-determination*—Habits of subordinating immediate satisfactions for more distant and worthwhile goals Willingness to do what is right even though it may be painful

*Economic Self-determination*—Willingness to do work of all kinds as a means to economic independence Habits of industry in pursuing objectives involving money

*Sex Adjustment*—Disposition to meet and deal socially with members of the opposite sex Satisfactory degree of interest in mixed parties, dancing courting etc

Taking this scale as his standard Dr Link proceeded to measure the habits in question in the case of two thousand youths The results which he obtained and which we shall present here led him to believe that he had secured objective evidence for his theory of personality First, he noted the traits of youngsters who were regarded as having effective personalities Then he set up specifications for a habit building program harmonizing with his notion of personality Dr Link's definition of good personality is stated as the extent to which an individual has learned to convert his organic energies into habits and actions which successfully influence other people This proposal is much like our theory of good personality as a condition in which the energy of the individual flows out and in which there is a minimum of stress and strain because the basic motives of life have been realized Our view takes account of an important factor, however, which is apparently not included in the one above It is that there are some people who have been brow beaten and thwarted so much that they simply cannot enter upon a program of converting their energies into social skills They must be assisted in finding reasonable ego recognition before they can venture from the shell of introversion which they have erected around themselves

### *The Social Skills of Popular Youth*

To return to Dr Link's specifications of effective youthful personalities we find them running somewhat as follows (1)

Young people who expended their physical energies during the day in a variety of competitive games and sports and who consequently slept regularly and well at night rated higher in personality traits than did those who lived less actively (2) Those who participated in school activities such as clubs, musical organizations, dramatic societies, and committees were more extroverted and socially ascendent than those who were given to a great deal of reading (3) Boys and girls who attended Sunday School and whose parents went to church achieved higher ratings on the personality scales than did others Membership in social organizations, Y M C A , or Y W C A , contributed even more to a good showing (4) Youths who were given to mingling in groups, introducing people to each other, paying legitimate compliments on appropriate occasions, refraining from hurting other people's feelings, and avoiding the pitfalls of frank criticism rated high in the various personality traits (5) Young people who mingled naturally in social affairs where both sexes were involved, who learned to dance, who enjoyed mixed parties, and who liked to walk to and from school occasionally with a boy or girl friend, made higher scores on the scale than did those who did none of these things (6) Those who were willing to work at such tasks as doing chores, selling tickets, and other active jobs in order to assist in supporting themselves had decidedly better personalities than did the children who refused to do any of these things Economic independence was said to be an important factor in desirable personality (7) Youths who were willing to do things they did not naturally enjoy because they knew they were expected to, ranked higher in extroversion and self-determination than did those who would do only as they pleased when they pleased The same was true of those who were willing to try games even though they knew they would not make a good showing These youths frequently displayed their superior personalities by being friendly with individuals whom they disliked, by serving on committees when the work became heavy, and by doing their appointed tasks even when these interfered with their fun

### *The Qualities That We Want in Personality*

From these specifications we can see in some detail the picture of a good personality Through it all we can discern the elements

of willingness to do what is right even when inconvenient of self-determination and control and of generous social action. These good qualities represent extroversion at its best. It is true of course that one could ask in this connection which is cause and which is effect? Does an already good personality account for the desirable actions of these individuals or do the actions in question constitute the superior personality? Be the answer what it may we have a basis upon which to proceed in carving out a personality since we know to some extent what qualities we want. As far as we know this is one of the first researches from which such objective facts are obtainable.

### *Character in the Personality Pattern*

Before bringing this section of our discussion to a close we wish to suggest the place of character in the desirable personality picture. We realize that personality as commonly regarded is thought of in terms of effective social qualities and that an individual may be regarded as possessing these qualities even though he is somewhat loose morally. On this score a gangster or even a criminal who is extrovertive in action dominant socially self-determined and reasonably stable emotionally may be said to have a good personality. Nevertheless in our judgment this is too limited a view of the matter. A desirable personality one that leaves a constructive and permanent influence upon the pages of history or in the memory of a community is one founded on the solid principles of socialized living. The great men of antiquity and of modern times were men of stability not of shifting standards. It is our belief that a genuinely excellent personality includes the virtues of honesty integrity chastity and respect for the common good. We are not referring to so-called Victorianism or to prudish Calvinism just to plain honest decent living. Clinical evidence has certainly indicated that other things being equal a young man who thinks of women and marriage respectfully and who hopes to develop real virtues in his children possesses an infinitely more desirable personality than does the gay and flippant extrovert who regards women as his prey. Young people who pride themselves on being worldly wise are usually immature. Why should we not reserve the concept of truly fine personality for those who actually possess the qualities that make for constructive socialized living?

## III WHAT SKILLS LEAD TO PERSONALITY IMPROVEMENT?

Personality improvement, we feel, must take place along one of two lines if it is to result in a balanced satisfaction of self motives and social motives. One who has been forced by circumstances to be too selfless may need help in bolstering his ego. The over-extroverted personality may also need guidance toward self restraint. For the majority the improvement program also involves the acceptance of *right methods of thinking*.

*Right Methods of Thinking*

Right thinking in turn involves active visualization of clean-cut life goals, and picturing oneself as succeeding in reaching them. Both are incentives to action and both lead to extroverting one's energy. They discourage morbid thinking and influence positive action favorably. As Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick has so aptly put it: 'Picture yourself vividly as winning, and that alone will contribute immeasurably to success. Do not picture yourself as anything and you will drift like a derelict.' The successful personality is almost invariably the one whose life endeavors are directed toward a commanding goal. Lincoln's life was motivated by his desire to preserve the Union. Edison lived and labored for his inventions. Beethoven's life was immersed in his crowning passion to create masterful music. These men were constructive thinkers, not visionaries.

*The Influence of Positive Thinking*

We must consider too the influence of positive thinking on bodily processes. It has been known for centuries that a constructive outlook has a great deal to do with the control of one's physical condition. As the Bible says, 'A merry heart doeth good like medicine.' Fear, worry, anxiety and the like lead to a variety of bodily disturbances—digestive disorders, backaches, eye strain, stiff necks, insomnia, loss of appetite and even paralysis. One can think himself into a state of sickness, poverty, and failure no matter what the actual facts of his life are. This is what so many introverts and neurotics actually do. They are disposed to be ill, and ill they frequently become. When one's thoughts are on health, employment, prosperity, and success he is

not only drawn toward these goals but he gets new ideas related to their achievement

Faith healing, for instance, is merely a matter of a marked change in attitude, a change which can sometimes, under spectacular circumstances, enable an afflicted individual to throw away his crutches. His thoughts and beliefs have been given hopeful direction and his bodily processes respond accordingly. All this is possible because what we call in popular language "body" and "mind" are in the final analysis but two aspects of the same thing. We see, then, that the improvement of personality is positively dependent upon constructive, purposeful thinking. Such improvement is not always easy to obtain but the aspirant after a balanced life must be determined to succeed. He will need to regard the natural resistance to this attitude as an expected obstacle.

### *The Development of Active Social Skills*

It has become an established principle of psychology that we must learn any new form of behavior by actual participation in activities. We learn by doing, by purposeful action, not by thinking, wishing, or hoping. Sermons, prayers and exhortations are but words, the trait actions which they urge upon us must be achieved in life-like situations. We learn to be honest by returning the dime we saw our friend lose, by reporting the window we broke and by giving back the extra change we received, not by listening to talks, by reading entrancing stories exemplifying honesty, or by making resolutions.

So it is with personality building—we improve ourselves by doing many definite things that exemplify good personality and by making a wide variety of contacts with many different people and activities. Whenever we set out to learn a new skill, if we but satisfy the requirements of a true learning situation, as explained in a previous section, we can acquire personality abilities just as we can athletic, musical, vocational, or recreational skills. We must always work toward a definite goal, be motivated by a real need or incentive, have a reasonably clear understanding of what needs to be done, be sufficiently mature to be assured of success, have some tangible way of gauging the progress made, and primarily we must be willing to *keep at the task*, even though the going is hard at first, until success crowns our efforts.

### *Methods in Developing Personality*

There are at least three closely related ways in which one can proceed to develop specific personality skills. These are getting inspirational ideas from books devoted to the subject and carrying out the ideas in actual life situations, filling out a standard personality test or inventory and using the wrong responses as a basis for definite practice; and listing the actual things that people with good personalities do and then learning to do them point by point. One can and probably should use a combination of these approaches. Let us, then, canvass each of these methods briefly and see how they work out, remembering that each must be employed in connection with right methods of thinking and in harmony with correct principles of learning. Above all we must consider the factors of incentive and consistent effort.

#### *The Inspirational Method*

Let us illustrate the inspirational reading method with two well known examples. In an excellent book of its kind, *Making the Most of Your Life*, by John J. B. Morgan and E. T. Webb, we read the story of Theodore Roosevelt's conquest of his early ill health, his fears, and his physical handicaps. We are impressed with the fact that instead of feeling sorry for himself, of refusing to recognize his limitations, of nursing his disappointments, or of turning to endless rest cures and ocean voyages, Roosevelt overcame his handicaps by sheer grit and effort. We are thrilled by the way he worked his way to health and fame by engaging in active sports and physical labor, by facing danger, and by developing social skills that entirely eclipsed his lack of physical attractions. We are motivated to make our own handicaps incentives to greater effort.

The same thing occurs as we read of the amazing emotional stability of Abraham Lincoln, of how he used even vicious criticism as a means of mirroring his faults to himself. We then resolve to take all criticism unemotionally, to use it as a stepping stone to improvement, and to cease pampering ourselves by expecting people to emphasize only our good points. If we actually plunged in and practiced consistently the two virtues of *overcoming handicaps* and of *profiting tangibly by adverse criticism*, our personalities



would be greatly improved. Then we could go on step by step in developing the habit of success, overcoming self-consciousness, outwitting our fears, developing social dominance, becoming poised and relaxed, whipping inferiority feelings, meeting people easily, and all the rest. By active effort we would gradually *convert our negative introverted qualities into positive extroverted abilities*.

Inspirational reading has drawbacks in that the examples are remote and often unrelated to the concrete problems of the reader. He is likely to leave the book as most college students leave the classroom—with much information but no change in behavior. It is better to start with a definitely recognized need and then to seek ways and means of satisfying that particular stress. Little enthusiasm can be secured for material which might possibly fulfill a future need. Motivation grows out of unsatisfactory situations and thus the constructive suggestions in entertaining stories of personality improvement will usually be lost on the casual reader. Book reading always has this handicap, its recommendations are so often not carried out in actual behavior. Reading is not automatically an incentive to action. Only a recognized state of personal imbalance or tension can drive an individual to action.

### *The Personality Analysis Method*

The second method of improving personality is much more promising. Here one gets a program of definite items for practice from the results of taking a standard printed personality test\*. If the individual is honest he will answer many of the items in a way indicative of wrong personality trends and so locate a collection of weaknesses which are peculiar to his own personality pattern. These shortcomings can then be used in a personal program for definite rebuilding. This method should be supervised by a competent second party when a clinical examination indicates that it is necessary. In fact, it is one of the plans that some of us use in clinical practice.

Let us illustrate with two weaknesses of a certain client who took an examination under our supervision. Among other re-

\* See for example the *California Test of Personality* by Louis P. Thorpe, Willis W. Clark and Ernest W. Tieg. Published by California Test Bureau, 3636 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, California.

sponses this individual acknowledged that intellectual affairs always interested him more than athletics and that he was much affected by the praise or blame of other people. He was weak on many other points but we will carry our illustration through with these two, both of which were indicative of wrong behavior trends so far as his particular personality was concerned.

After some preliminary instruction and psychological help necessary for his case, this individual was given typewritten sheets telling him what to *do* and how to *practise* to correct each fault. On the instruction sheets, which we shall reproduce here, he was told to report the number of times he performed given acts and the amount of time he spent on them. The exercise sheet for developing an active interest in athletics ran as follows:

Most introverted people are more interested in intellectual matters than in athletics. In order to develop extroversion, your exercise for today (and as long as necessary) is to do whatever you can to develop an increased interest in athletics.

One thing you should do is to participate in some athletics. If this is not possible or feasible, you can at least interest yourself in the sport sheet of the newspaper or in the sport news of a magazine like *Time*.

One good plan would be to select some sport, make a study of the records held by various of its stars, and keep abreast of the current news in this particular sport. You will probably find that after you get started along this line you will develop an interest in it you now think impossible. You will also notice that you will find yourself more at home among those, usually extroverts, who take an interest in such matters.

The exercise sheet for developing an objective attitude toward praise and blame was phrased as follows:

Watch out for praise and blame. Learn to be objective in your attitude toward them, that is, learn to look upon praise and blame bestowed upon you as you would look upon them were someone else being considered. If someone else is praised or blamed you probably think first of the justice or truth of the matter. If you found that they were justly praised or blamed you would give the person credit in an impersonal sort of way, without much feeling on your part.

That is, you would do this if the individual were a stranger. If the person were your child, however, you would take a personal in

terest in the matter, and you would be more inclined to feel elated when the child was praised and depressed when he was blamed.

When it is yourself who is praised or blamed you will notice this effect even more closely. But the right attitude to take is the objective attitude—that of looking at the matter from the eyes of a disinterested person. You must be careful not to be too elated by praise and depressed by blame. Instead, try to see the real facts, continue the behavior which merits praise, and avoid acts which you realize should be condemned.

In the case of our client these exercises were multiplied until he had built himself up point by point by active work on his own problems. This is a systematic procedure and is best carried out under the guidance of a psychologist. However, it is clear that in a general way it can be accomplished by any individual who has enough incentive to work at it. Only the candidate himself can accomplish what needs to be done. The psychologist can only guide and encourage. It is particularly important for the individual to realize that although it will be hard at first, he must overcome his handicaps *by doing the very thing he fears and by actively performing the tasks which he dislikes.*

It has been found that activities like accepting blame, soliciting funds for a cause, or being active at a social gathering are much easier to perform when approached in the spirit of personality exercises, than they are under unmotivated circumstances. Introverted people get along much better when they do things as personality building stunts than they do when there is nothing in particular to work for. If they weather the original shock of getting under way, they soon find the work easier. Eventually the desired personality qualities are achieved.

### *The Development of Social Skills Method*

Our third suggestion for acquiring personality is much like that above. Instead, however, of beginning with negative qualities we propose here to examine those *positive* skills and abilities that people with *fine personalities* possess. It is a known fact, for example, that people with desirable personalities tend to remember their friends and relatives on birthdays and anniversaries. The individual needing improvement can take this as a clue and proceed to do likewise whether he feels like it or not.

If the better liked people remember to call others, including

bus drivers, grocery clerks and garage mechanics, by their names — and everyone seems to appreciate this notice — then the introvert can make an easy and appropriate start by doing the same. We know that popular people are usually cordial in their greetings. They also show interest in the private problems of even casual acquaintances, office boys, stenographers, newsboys, and barbers. The seeker after a better personality could do nothing better than follow this example to the letter. In fact he would get much more out of it than the newsboy if he were to tip the latter once in a while. Above all, it would reward the individual who has been able to make but few friends to cultivate the acquaintance of a person or two for the sole purpose of seeing what he or she could do to be of help.

In this instance there should be no thought of personal advantage to be gained through the new acquaintance. That would be to fall back into the lap of the old egoism — the in-grown perversion.

### *Standards for the Development of Social Skills*

Let us see what other personality qualities and social skills can be selected for learning on this basis. The desirable youths in Dr. Link's study used their energy in active sports and competitive games of various kinds. The *extroverting* of energy and the *mingling with people*, even in quiet games, are constructive activities. The builder of personality should by all means try to develop special musical, athletic, or other active skills which will enable him to meet many people and to give a good account of himself socially. No program could be finer for the shy introvert. Most well-adjusted young people contribute something to group life in Sunday School, in church, in character building organizations like the Boy or Girl Scouts, Y M C A or Y W C A, and the like. Introverts would be immeasurably improved if they could, with some show of friendliness, get themselves to do likewise. If they dislike religion they could make active contributions to lodges, political groups, or welfare organizations.

The builder of personality might well pattern after Link's youths in being ready occasionally with a witty story and by becoming fluent in making introductions. He could also improve himself by giving intelligently worded compliments on occasions, and by substituting diplomacy and tact for blunt criticism.

These social graces make one liked and pour oil on troubled social waters. As a natural stimulus to these skills the developing introvert should continually give himself more rope socially, that is he should gradually mingle more with people at parties, dances and dinners, all the time doing what he can to contribute actively to the program involved. Never should he think purely in terms of how he is being treated or how little fun he himself is getting. Finally the rebuilders who really means business should follow the standard set by the young people in question by constantly doing things—little things at first—that he does not naturally like to do but that are fair and generous to others. He could entertain a homely person at a party, take some crippled person to an appointment in his car, help solicit money for the Red Cross or do an errand for his family.

### *Purposeful Action and Personality Building*

Personality improvement is a different problem with each individual. For those suffering from the handicaps of marked introversion some form or combination of the programs of continued action just described is the answer to the quest for adjustment. Many cultist systems offer people hopeful thinking including affirmations and self-suggestions but they fail because they do not insist on active effort. Other schemes emphasize action but are without plan or goal. We are suggesting a program of action based not only on an intelligent plan but upon a picture of success. The chief difficulty is the lethargy of the very ones who need it most. The typical introvert likes his self-constructed dream world better than he does the action involved in making real life adjustments. It is hard for him to give up his self-centered life. He usually feels very discouraged after a few attempts at forgetting himself in favor of friendly action. If he refuses to turn back even though sorely tempted and keeps pluckily on he soon passes the crisis and eventually experiences easier going. The important thing is to make the start and *then be sure to do something constructive every day*.

#### IV WHAT CAN WORKING AT EXTROVERSION DO FOR US?

It is possible for anyone needing the experience to work at extroversion. Of course when we say extroversion we really mean

decent living under his own power. He had done much to carve out a new personality.

### *Overcoming Sensitiveness and Aversions*

A young woman of unusual intelligence but whose charms were seriously handicapped by sensitiveness and cynicism—common introverted symptoms—provides a good example of active systematic personality rebuilding. After her confidence was gained and she saw what she would have to do, she proceeded to discipline herself in a most systematic way. She was urged particularly to work on her dislike for her husband's friends and for social functions at her home. She was also admonished to give attention to her cynicism about religion, which she considered unscientific, to her aversion for uneducated people, and to her unwillingness to bother herself for anyone. She started on home parties by forcing herself to be solicitous of others' fun, and actually testified that she learned to have a good time without trying to do so directly. She adopted the policy of being patient and even a bit indulgent with cultists, two of whom were relatives of hers. She practiced being attentive to people in all walks of life. She even kept a record of her successes and failures. With this motivation, goal, and willingness to work, she soon found her friends remarking about the decided change in her personality. They now like her better, and she likes them better. Balanced living has turned the trick.

### *How to Wake Up and Live*

One of the most remarkable cases of personality rebuilding that has come to our attention was accomplished through the ingenuity and insight of one of the author's university colleagues. A mature but not yet middle-aged school teacher came for advice concerning her career. She was tired, discouraged, and had gone to summer school far too many consecutive years for her own good. She was low on clothes, had very few friends, and felt that her outlook for the future was a bleak one. Having known her for some time and seeing the situation broadly, her adviser literally shocked her by suggesting (1) that she give up summer school for at least one year possibly longer, (2) that she borrow enough money to buy herself some really good quality clothes that would

help give her a new incentive to maintain her self-respect, (3) that she take a trip even though it might be a short one where new sights and sounds would stimulate her jaded interest, and (4) that she move into a better neighborhood where there would be opportunities for richer and more challenging social contacts.

Upon recovering from the shock of these suggestions and after thinking it through the teacher decided to take a chance on the plan. She reasoned that her present drab and lonely routine was not very successful as far as her personality and its contribution to the growth and development of her pupils were concerned. So she borrowed the money, bought herself a few quality clothes, had her fingernails manicured, consulted a skillful hairdresser, and subsequently took a voyage to Hawaii. During the whole course of the trip she made it her business to meet cultured people, to make herself attractive and helpful in vacation activities, to learn all she could from people, and to adopt the bearing of a successful woman. On her return she moved into an attractive neighborhood which though not expensive enabled her to make a number of interesting friends.

In the end this woman had transformed her personality. She had literally learned to "wake up and live." Her down-at-the-heel outlook had been traded for an interest in people and in what was going on in the world. Furthermore, the reader should notice that she accomplished this entire program herself through *active effort*. Her adviser did not ask her to pamper herself with the new clothes. He suggested that she use them as a means to an end—the rebuilding of a partially frustrated life through extroverted activity and studied effort. This she did and paid back her loan gratefully. She wrote an account of the affair as an informal report to her counselor. It was written in the first person and in an engaging style. It was an inspiring story of readjusting a life through the provision of fresh channels for the satisfaction of basic personality needs.

### *Formula for the Balanced Life*

We can all work for the kind of extroversion that discourages concern with such questions as: How are we being treated? Are we getting a square deal? How much do people appreciate us? And will the government retire us with a pension that is com-

mensurate with our true worth? The kind of extroversion to seek is that which encourages ambition self reliance ceaseless effort emotional stability intelligent and sympathetic accommodation to others and as Aristotle expressed it obedience to self formulated rules This is the only formula that psychologists know for achieving the balanced life the life in which egoistic and social motives have clasped hands

### *Suggested Self imposed Rules of Living*

In undertaking a personality building program most individuals should formulate their own rules However, we suggest here a list of twelve general rules contributed by the findings of psychology They may be modified to suit individual requirements Throughout the fundamental importance of good health is taken for granted

- 1 Meet a variety of people in a social way with a view to contributing actively to their happiness
- 2 Make it a point to give up comfort and ease in favor of constructive action at least once each day
- 3 Be definitely generous and solicitous of your circle of friends and acquaintances and in a general way of others
- 4 Make an effort to learn to like people and to show reasonable respect for their judgment
- 5 Make some contribution—at least a small one—to worthwhile social and civic community projects
- 6 Develop a few skills and hobbies—including correct speech—that encourage social contacts
- 7 Bear your share of both major and minor home and community responsibilities no matter how intensely you desire to escape them
- 8 Extrovert your energy toward the world of affairs and fight every tendency to pamper yourself
- 9 Identify yourself with at least one social religious or political organization whose interests you can serve
- 10 If it is at all possible become economically independent Look upon doles gifts and doubtful security schemes as a last resort
- 11 Follow commonly acknowledged right principles because they are fair to all concerned not merely because they pay
- 12 Adjust to the more enduring and fundamental moral laws and social conventions without complaining



## V HOW DO WE KNOW OUR PLAN WILL WORK?

*The Ancients and Harmonious Human Relations*

The principles of constructive living suggested by modern psychological research are certainly anything but new. They were given rich expression in the doctrines of the first Christian Era in the pages of Old Testament and other ancient religious and philosophic writings. Modern psychology is merely re-discovering the principles of effective and harmonious human relations. Psychology started with a new slate so far as religious beliefs are concerned but it has so far largely substantiated the findings of an earlier day. We are actors on the same old stage as that of the ancients. We are confronted with the same problem of adjusting to the requirements of our natures as well as to the varying demands of the world about us. Man has always been subject to the same hopes, disappointments, frustrations, and general self-concern that we see so much in evidence now. The ancient sages taught that the avenue to happiness is by way of reasonable self-denial and active love for others. About all that has changed is the language in which we express our exhortations.

The principle of selflessness so important as a balance wheel in personality adjustment, was stated by Christ in the famous words, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' The Buddhist sacred scripture advocated a similar formula for human welfare when it proposed

Let us live happily then not hating those who hate us  
 Let us live free from hatred among men who hate  
 Let a man overcome anger by kindness evil by good  
 Let him conquer the stingy by a gift the liar by wrath

Jean Jacques Rousseau caught a gleam of the great function of altruistic living when he exclaimed. Every man goes down to the grave carrying in his clutched hands only that which he has given away.

*Then and Now in Personality Building*

Some of the social doctrines of the ancients now considered visionary and impractical may constitute the way of life upon

which a permanent society must be built. Nationalism, war, and economic insecurity are grim reminders that we cannot build a world on a foundation of self-concern. It still seems to be true, just as it was in those days, that the man who concentrates on saving his own life will lose it (psychologically) and that he who gives of his energy to assist his friends finds security in the midst of a life of problems.

If the ancient writers seemed to emphasize the unselfish side of life almost to the exclusion of man's ego needs, it was probably because they saw so little generosity about which to comment. Perhaps they did not appreciate the fact that excessive ego-thwartings create in some instances the very stresses which lead to extreme self-concern. Thus we feel warranted in suggesting that we seek a satisfactory balance between self-expression and selfless living. When accomplished in connection with intelligent self-control, due regard for the common good, adherence to reasonably definite standards of honesty and morality, and an active life, this balance promises to be synonymous with the adjusted life.

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## VII HOW CAN WE BECOME AS OTHERS LIKE US?

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We have seen that good personality is a matter of the possession of socially effective attitudes and skills that can be clearly defined and successfully learned. It is apparent that, if properly motivated, one can gradually carve out a desirable set of personality qualities. With perseverance and a willingness to sacrifice the natural tendency to let *undesirable habits drift along* any reasonably normal individual can acquire those social graces and attitudes that make for acceptance by other people.

There are psychologically sound avenues to constructive popularity. These avenues have been determined by trained psychologists, as well as by other students of human nature, and are now available to the public. It is our purpose in this chapter to point out tangible ways of becoming as others like us. A sound consideration of this problem involves the following approaches:

- I What Is the Psychological Basis of Human Relations?
  - II What Does Psychology Say about Dealing with People?
  - III What Sure Avenues Exist to Sound Popularity?
  - IV How Does Liking People Contribute to Personality?
  - V How Can Psychological Oil Ease the Social Machinery?
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## VII HOW CAN WE BECOME AS OTHERS LIKE US?

### I WHAT IS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL BASIS OF HUMAN RELATIONS?

We have placed considerable emphasis upon the importance of developing a degree of extroversion and self sufficiency that will guarantee in a general way satisfactory social adjustments and personal happiness. We turn now to a more detailed study of the definite kinds of social behavior which even extroverts must understand and practice if they expect to enjoy a cordial reception from individuals who mean something to them, as well as from people in general. There are certain attitudes that we must take toward people and certain definite things that we must do in their behalf if we expect them to like us. It is part of the ego drive to be wanted, to be accepted. Yet thousands of people find themselves confused on this point, they are not popular and do not seem to know the reason why. These individuals do not realize that acceptance on the part of others springs from certain forms of action which can be learned.

#### *Why People Do Not Like Us*

The individual who is unpopular with his fellows is usually one who is suffering from a psychological disorder or a person who has failed to understand the import of his own social behavior. As an example of the latter, Dr. Donald Laird tells the story of a young man who, in spite of having most of the requisites for a good personality continued to be very unpopular with his classmates. Analysis discovered that the boy was continually sponging off the others in the matter of cigarettes and other minor items concerning which one can be almost unconsciously careless. When informed of the feeling that others had for these shortcomings, the lad made the necessary changes and in time regained the good wishes of his friends.

According to our view, people who decline to try to win the favor of their associates are suffering from a lack of psychological balance. They have either been so busy fighting for everything

they got or so concerned with satisfying their own desires that they have failed to learn the relation between giving and getting. They have not learned that sincere interest in other people's problems brings in its wake the very acceptance which they so much crave. They do not know the secret of legitimate recognition-getting through sincere recognition-giving. These people have not balanced egoistic and social motives.

Well balanced people treat their associates with genuine respect and always with decency. Too many others endeavor to win the approval of people through fear of the consequences of doing otherwise or because they have an ulterior motive in mind, an axe to grind. This superficial process always breaks down when the selfish motive is discovered. The person who everts himself only with people who are profitable to him, or whom he happens to like, will find more and more reasons for disliking those who are of no advantage to him or whom he is incapable of winning. Seeking personal advantage in every social contact represents a form of personality perversion that works against harmonious human relations.

### *The Importance of Home Training*

One reason for the widespread lack of appreciation of such important psychological bases of human relations as mutual respect and regard for the feelings of others is that so many children are reared on an individualistic program. Children so trained soon acquire the philosophy that every man should be out for all he can get, and that it should be every intelligent individual's business to get all he can before someone beats him to it. This is again the "every man for himself and the Devil take the hindmost" theory that is so damaging to human relations. That such an attitude is widespread and deeply entrenched in the outlook of a great many people cannot be gainsaid. Socially speaking, however, it is a doctrine that reaps little but thorns and thistles.

How much better it is to show children from their earliest days that society is a great pattern of personal contacts in which human needs are interdependent. It is better if boys and girls are taught that the security and happiness of each individual depends upon the actions of all. Properly guided the child can be made to realize that his acts must pass the test of fairness to others. He can be taught that the welfare of his associates as

well as his own desires must be taken into account. With this social pattern view of behavior as his standard and with the realization that it brings self-completeness, the growing child learns to expend his energies in social service as well as in his own behalf. This plan reacts in everyone's favor. The individual makes his contribution to the group and experiences personal happiness from so doing, when associates respond with approval, the individual gets his ego-recognition without having sought it and personality balance is the result.

### *Futility of the Bag of Tricks Motive*

We should mention here that anyone who proposes to win the approval of people in his circle of contacts should bring more to situations than a bag of social tricks. He must do more than play on another's natural desire for recognition. He should learn to be thoroughly sincere and reasonably selfless in home and outside social relations, in short, genuinely desirous of making a contribution to the welfare of his immediate associates. With this attitude upon which to build he can logically proceed to deal with all people in the light of the requirements of their natures.

Many books on techniques for dealing with people are in our judgment inadequate. These volumes tell the reader to recognize the other fellow's ego by doing things to make him feel more important. Devices for accomplishing this end are given in profusion. Little is said about making such a definite and lasting effort to maintain a generous interest in people that the common good becomes the standard of action. The result is that many individuals use their social tricks diplomatically with business associates but not at home or in dealing with people who mean nothing to their welfare. This is superficial self-centered behavior and will not solve the ills of social friction. It will not even enable a designing individual to be a good salesman. Furthermore, a superficial approach to winning friends does nothing to relieve possible personality disturbances.

Social skills, not tricks, must be used if human relations are to be successful. Our plea is for more sincerity and deeper insight into the operations of human nature. Designing persons learn social tricks in a crude effort to get by. Sincere individuals are concerned with an understanding of how best to further har-

monious social intercourse They cater to others out of a sincere desire to balance personal interests with social concern

## II WHAT DOES PSYCHOLOGY SAY ABOUT DEALING WITH PEOPLE?

### *The Importance of Getting Along with People*

From what has been said we see that our own security depends upon the way we treat people This is a world in which we are dependent upon one another for material and social needs It is essential that we learn to deal successfully with our associates All of us need some form of security, be it financial, social academic, political, or religious This desire is fundamental in human nature and explains most of the ceaseless striving we see all about us It is clear that we best guarantee our own by assisting others in their search for security in one form or another Our friends naturally appreciate help and are in turn inclined to do what they can to recognize and help us Such mutual recognition enables all concerned to make progress in satisfying fundamental needs for recognition and appreciation This is the basic psychology of dealing with people Selfless activity—doing things to be of help—is essential to being liked And to be liked is fundamental to a feeling of sound security

As might be expected, research and careful observation have something to say about getting along with people Research studies usually focus on the question of what traits make us liked, or conversely, what traits and attitudes tend to make us unpopular Such information is well worth having since an intelligent person can use it as a basis for taking an inventory of his own personality qualities As we shall see, most of the desirable characteristics possessed by popular people can be acquired by one who is in earnest about modifying his actions This statement is especially true in the case of normal individuals who are willing to identify their own faults In the case of extremely unhappy or maladjusted personalities the outlook for self improvement is, of course, more doubtful

### *What Qualities People Like in Us*

Dr Ruch \* has reported a study in which more than six hun

\* Floyd L Ruch *Psychology and Life* Scott Foresman & Company 1937 pp 378 380

dred college students were asked to list the traits which they liked the most, as well as those which they liked the least, in a group of their acquaintances. The men tended very decidedly to prefer the traits of intelligence, cheerfulness, friendliness, and congeniality of interests. This was true whether they referred to men or to women acquaintances, although in the latter men desired beauty as well. It will be seen that most of the characteristics mentioned can be acquired through voluntary effort. We can certainly learn to be cheerful and to act friendly. These are common, extrovertive qualities of a practical nature.

In the study just mentioned, women liked other women who were intelligent, helpful, loyal, and generous. They preferred men who were intelligent, considerate, kind, and cheerful. Here again we have concrete action traits that can be achieved step by step through conscious attention to their development. With sufficient motivation and clearness as to goals, any one of us can become more considerate, loyal, and generous. We can even learn to be more intelligent in dealing with people. In fact, we have improved our social intelligence when we have learned to be helpful to people and to avoid such barriers to popularity as snobbishness, deceit, and affectation. These traits are handicaps to being liked. All of them indicate the presence of excessive ego.

### *Annoyances That Cause Dislike*

An investigation by Dr. Cason\* gives us a long list of annoyances reported by people of various ages. These are common forms of behavior that represent carelessness and that could easily be avoided by the exercise of a little caution. All are either physical crudities or self-centered modes of action. The annoyances in question include back seat driving, continual criticism, crowding in front of others in a line, continual bragging, being a poor loser, persistent talking about illnesses, failing to pay attention in conversation, coughing in other people's faces, belching, and constantly criticising food. That all of these faults can usually be avoided is clear. That the person who rids himself of these and similar annoyances thereby greatly improves his personality and his acceptability to refined people is certain. The important point is to recognize the presence of these responses in

\* H. Cason, 'Common Annoyances' *Psychological Monographs* Vol. 40 No. 2, 1930.



According to our knowledge of human nature one is deluding himself unless he recognizes the importance of appealing to the other person's need of favorable recognition. This principle has been widely popularized by recent writers on social relations. It is commonly conceded that one can develop substantial friendships much more readily by showing an interest in other people than by waiting for them to take the initiative. The reason for this fact should be apparent from our study of the fundamental motives of man.

### *Steps in Being Well Received*

In his chapter, "The Psychology of Improving Your Personality," Dr. Crane\* stresses the point that there are two essential and complementary steps in becoming well liked. These are gaining as much legitimate prestige as we can in the eyes of our associates, and then dealing with them in such ways that they feel more satisfied with their attainments as a result of having met us. Many individuals, especially emotionally unstable introverts, ruin their chances of acceptance by violating both of these principles. Introvertive people are interested neither in developing personal skills, recreational habits, and social charm, nor in contributing to the needs of their associates. Being self-centered, introverts are interested in getting recognition, even though unearned, and are quite incapable of reversing the process.

One can build personal prestige and thus lay the ground-work for social acceptance by becoming well informed, well-educated, carefully groomed, skillful in his work, active in recreational or athletic endeavors, cultured in social etiquette, and extrovertive in his attitude toward people. It is only a short step from the possession of active abilities to the goal of social intelligence. The person who comes to a social situation without skills, indifferent about making a favorable impression, and largely devoid of conversation on matters of current interest has little chance to win friends, even though he tries to play up to others' sense of personal worth. Such handicaps as unkempt clothes, body odors, or dingy teeth further discount one's chances of being accepted.

We experience little inflation through recognition from people

\* George W. Crane, *Psychology Applied* Northwestern University Press, 1932, Chap. 6.

of slight or no consequence. The value of a compliment is in proportion to the prestige enjoyed by the individual who is gracious enough to bestow it. Students appreciate recognition of their abilities by teachers more than they do that coming from a bootblack. Most girls would rather be smiled at by Robert Taylor than by a taxi-driver. We are flattered when people of attainment notice us. Therefore we should seek to become individuals of attainment ourselves. We should earn our recognition, not expect people to be impressed with us because we think so much of ourselves! If, as advocated in our last chapter, we carve out a personality through active effort, there will be no problem of becoming popular.

### *Legitimate Diplomacy in Dealing with People*

In regard to steps that we can take in getting along with people through satisfying their natural desire for recognition, psychology has several suggestions to offer. These can be summarized under such related points as asking others for favors, implying the superiority of others, imputing knowledge and judgment to others, giving indirect compliments, showing a willingness to serve others, emphasizing the social standing of the other person, and learning what the other person wants.

### *Asking Others for Favors*

To be asked to do a favor for someone often involves the inference that one is selected because of some special capacity or desirability. If the request does not require too much expenditure of effort or time it brings in its wake a feeling of personal worth. It is flattering to be singled out from a group. The author will never forget the feeling of pride he experienced when as a student he was asked to substitute for a veteran teacher who had suffered temporary injuries. The sense of personal worth arising from requests for favors is especially strong in young immature men and women and individuals who feel somewhat inferior. Those striving for recognition are peculiarly susceptible to acknowledgment in any form. All of us are creatures of feeling more than of logic, and few fail to experience the tingle of pride that comes from being counted upon for something.

### *Implying the Superiority of Another*

All of us revel in the thought of being desirably different, of being unique. Thus anyone who infers that we possess superior qualities or outstanding abilities evokes our appreciation. Those who have their names in Who's Who are seldom disturbed by a conversation devoted to that subject. Men like to contemplate the Biblical mandate that 'man is the head of the house', in fact, many of them have developed quite a case of arrogance over their feat of having been born a male! Many a young man has won the everlasting admiration of his employer by classifying him not as Mr Jones but as *the* Mr Jones. If we let an individual feel that his ideas and suggestions made possible the solution of a difficult problem we have won a friend. It is human nature to appreciate and be friendly to those who see superiority in us.

### *Imputing Knowledge and Judgment to Others*

Being desirous of recognition most of us feel honored when asked respectfully for our judgment in some matter. Such a request naturally makes us feel that our opinion is of some importance. We glow over the recognition and feel benevolent toward the inquirer. He has raised our self respect and is on his way to winning our friendship. Under ordinary circumstances we like to have people leave us with a pleasant, 'Whatever you say is all right with me' or 'If you say so I'll do it that way'. A college president of our acquaintance won the profound admiration of a young student body president by telling him that he was going to leave an important decision up to him. We have but to let an acquaintance feel that we respect his judgment to make ourselves secure in his good graces. Women are generally credited with having known and practised this tactful technique with men for centuries.

### *Giving Indirect Compliments*

We all experience a sense of satisfaction when someone of consequence infers that we have good judgment in the selection of clothes or, perchance that the college we chose is more than ordinarily eminent. We are also proud when told that we have done a good job of rearing our children that we possess unusual culture or perhaps that we have the most adorable dog on the

block. We like indirect compliments that make us feel distinctive. This method of raising self-esteem, when sincerely employed, is very effective in influencing people favorably. It is commonly attempted by salesmen, radio announcers, and contest managers. These hopeful gentlemen are quick to ask potential customers for their opinions concerning the merits of articles, what songs they like best, and just what slogan would best describe their products. As we all know, direct compliments are usually only effective when given in moderation and with obvious sincerity. But any compliment is better than no praise at all. Since they increase our feeling of security by reducing the stress of uncertainty regarding our standing we appreciate the donor of kind remarks. As many writers have brought out, praise is nearly always superior to blame. Blame has nothing to commend it in the field of human relations. Moderate praise can be made especially effective in the case of those who need motivation in their quest for better personality qualities

### *Showing an Interest in Other People's Affairs*

It has been said that "a bore is an individual who insists on talking about his rheumatism when you are just dying to tell about yours." Psychologically this statement is quite sound. When in conversation an individual continues to talk about himself and his exploits, he not only neglects the other person but may actually make him feel inferior by comparison. When we reverse the process and graciously converse about the other individual's attainments, he naturally feels that we are at least moderately concerned about him. His personal worth is acknowledged and as a consequence our stock goes up with him. The same is true when we are good listeners; the other fellow demonstrates his knowledge and appreciates its recognition. This is a simple and effective social technique but one that is continually violated by unpopular people

### *Emphasizing the Social Standing of the Other Person*

People of inferior social position almost invariably enjoy listening to comparisons that are favorable to them. They revel in expressions such as "All men are created equal," "God is no respecter of persons," or "Government by the people and for the people." These sayings tend to diminish class distinctions and

thus promote a feeling of personal importance in the common man. His need for recognition is satisfied and he feels grateful to the one who has recognized him. Politicians have frequently taken advantage of this tendency by speaking of farmers as "the backbone of the nation," of industrial workers as "the salt of the earth," and of women as "the power behind the throne." Sincerely used this form of diplomacy is very effective in dealing with people. The same may be said of imputing financial standing or social rating beyond that which individuals actually enjoy. Because of the premium placed on the possession of means or of social distinction most people experience an elevation of their sense of pride when these things are ascribed to them.

### *Learning What the Other Person Wants*

All of us are occupied with problems incidental to the realization of our goals. We must strive constantly to satisfy our recurring wants. It is natural, then, that we should be pleased when a given individual gets our point of view and helps us ever so little to get what we need. The intelligent thing to do is to initiate this process by learning what other persons need. Then lend at least moral support. Violations of this principle are numerous. Recently, while the author was deeply engrossed in working on this book an acquaintance dropped in and insisted on talking in detail for an hour about his latest business venture. The most patient person in the world could not have been pleased under the circumstances. To get favorable reactions, we must give some consideration to the legitimate wants of the person with whom we are endeavoring to establish a worthwhile relationship. This psychological principle is grounded in human nature.

### *The Importance of Sincerity in Human Relations*

As we bring this section of our discussion to a close we should perhaps emphasize again the fact that the social skills described are not offered as a bag of tricks to be used in bringing people around to one's point of view. Neither are they suggested as a clever means of getting what we want out of others. They are offered rather as a candid explanation of the natural processes of human nature, and are intended to be utilized as a sincere pro-

gram of action in getting along successfully with people. Any one who is not already too frustrated in his legitimate striving or otherwise unhappy, can profit by these suggestions to the extent of making new and successful social adjustments. By reversing the usual process of self-reference one can lay out a concrete program of action that will practically guarantee success in winning the sincere recognition of others. The novice will need to extrovert his intrenched self-interests. He will need to be increasingly diplomatic and sincere in the way he adapts his extrovertive ways to varying kinds of people and situations. If he persists there is no reason why the lonely individual should not succeed in surrounding himself with friends.

People are creatures of flesh and blood, of hopes, sorrows, and ambitions. They have deep-seated needs that must be taken into account in any scheme of human relations. To ignore their wants is to invite social oblivion. We have always recognized the universal need for food, sleep, rest, freedom from pain, sexual satisfaction, material goods, and financial security. But we have been notoriously neglectful of people's deep desire for personal recognition, for a sense of social importance. We all crave sincere appreciation and an occasional word of commendation. Many seldom get either. Here is one clue, then, to legitimate strategy in handling people. Instead of constantly inflating our own ego at the expense of those around us, we must exert ourselves to offer recognition in their behalf, to raise their self-esteem. Psychologically, this means that ego-striving must be balanced by reasonably selfless action.

### III. WHAT SURE AVENUES EXIST TO SOUND POPULARITY?

The psychology of dealing with people as presented in the previous section was based for the most part on the logic of what we know about the processes of human nature. It was a statement of what psychology says about making ourselves as others like us. The key note of its strategy was sincerity.

#### *Laboratory Evidence for Basis of Popularity*

There are those who prefer to base a plan of action on the exact findings of laboratory investigations; that is, they like to learn what traits are known from actual tests to be conducive to popu-

larity and which traits are clearly detrimental to the development of friendships. Evidence of this kind is not extensive but there is enough at hand to provide clear avenues to legitimate popularity. One of the most tangible studies of this kind is the one made by Dr. Donald Laird.\*

According to Dr. Laird's study of one hundred traits there are forty five that have a direct and fundamental bearing on popularity. The first nine of these traits are of particular importance the next thirteen are very significant and the remainder scarcely less so. All represent fairly definite trait actions *that can be learned* and all are taken from the findings of research. As we present these traits the reader will notice that many of them harmonize closely with the points brought out in the previous section. The traits were however in no sense arbitrarily selected. They are rather, the actual traits which were found upon examination to determine popularity. As he studies these the reader might attempt to analyze the reasons for their importance as personality qualities. He might endeavor to indicate just what phase of basic human nature each touches upon.

The nine most important trait actions and the ones to which Dr. Laird gives most weight in his presentation are as follows:

1 *Be Depended Upon to Do What You Say You Will* All human relations depend upon the sanctity of promises and agreements. Anyone who lightly violates promises increases the sense of insecurity of the one whom he lets down. Executives cannot use undependable employees and neither can friends feel drawn toward those who cannot be depended upon. Dependability is a cardinal virtue. It is basic to sound social relations.

2 *Go Out of Your Way to Help Others* So much has already been said about this unselfish activity that we need only point out the fact here that it finds second place as an important personality quality in this research study of characteristics that make one liked. Research evidence as well as our analysis of the relation between egoistic and social motives speaks of its importance.

3 *Do Not Show Off Your Knowledge* Clearly when we show off our assumed superiority suggests a corresponding degree of inferiority in other persons. We are balancing the scale.

\* Donald A. Laird *Why We Don't Like People* A. L. Glaser and Company 1935

in our favor and automatically endeavoring to lower the standing of other individuals in their own estimation. Let the other person show off. This relieves his stresses, raises his self-esteem, and wins his favor. Educated and successful people who enjoy superior positions must watch this point.

4 *Do Not Feel or Act Superior to Your Associates* This trait is closely related to the third point above. It shows that people resent being put in the position of feeling inferior. Everyone is looking for recognition and all of us dislike those who attempt to overshadow us. To make people like us we must make them feel more capable, not inferior. Even poor or uneducated persons like to feel that they are of consequence. It is always a mistake to talk down to or look down upon people.

5 *Do Not Reprimand People Who Do Things That Displease You* There are individuals who apparently need reprimanding but all are so constituted that they shun experiences of an unpleasant or painful nature. To tell people of their shortcomings increases their sense of insecurity and makes them afraid of the critic. The same is true in the case of trying to reform people. They experience a deflation of their sense of personal worth and forthwith dislike the would be reformer. In social relations at least, a quick way to lose friends is to call attention bluntly to poor English, inconsistent driving, an unbecoming hat or perhaps a social blunder.

6 *Do Not Exaggerate in Your Statements* One would hardly expect to find this trait in the nine most important reasons for dislike. Nevertheless in spite of our joviality about tall stories people do dislike those who persist in indulging in this form of indoor sport. We feel safer with those who can be depended upon to state the facts as they really are.

7 *Do Not Make Fun of Others Behind Their Backs* Some people are simple enough to endeavor to inflate their egos at the expense of other individuals. By making fun of others such persons put everyone on his guard lest he be next on the list. This is of course a case of inspiring fear and fear always encourages dislike. We like those whom we can trust to guard our security. Popularity is frequently lost, not found by ridicule or cracking jokes at the expense of our associates.

8 *Do Not Be Sarcastic* Sarcasm is usually a cover up for ignorance or dislike. It injures the self respect of the one to-



ward whom it is directed and makes him feel inferior. Sarcasm is often damaging to one's feeling of security. Furthermore, it puts the sarcastic individual in the light of assuming undue importance. All these reactions are painful to the receiver of the sarcasm and thus dispose him to dislike the sender. The diplomatic person does just the opposite; he offers indirect compliments that *make his friends feel more capable for having met him*. Tactful expressions of interest and approval develop friendship.

9. *Do Not Be Domineering.* Those who domineer others are as a rule attempting to atone for inability to win by sheer personal drawing power. We tend to despise the domineering individual because he threatens our sense of independence and because we sense his weakness. Hatred for domineering persons was especially evident in military service during the World War. The author saw many conceited officers make bitter enemies among their men.

As Dr. Laird brings out, a scrutiny of these traits and their social implications indicates that we dislike certain people because *we are afraid of them*, because *they make us feel insecure*, or because *they deflate our ego*. All three of these feelings run directly counter to the most basic and fundamental motives of life. A word to the wise is sufficient. Traits that make others afraid or that deflate their sense of worth must be avoided by those who would be liked. We must cultivate those actions that bring to our potential friends a sense of well being and a feeling of belonging.

Other important traits in the study under examination, some of which are presented in negative form, include (1) keep your clothing neat and tidy, (2) do not be bold and nervy, (3) do not laugh at the mistakes of others, (4) do not take a vulgar attitude toward the opposite sex, (5) do not be inclined to find fault with everybody else, (6) do not correct the mistakes of others, (7) do not tell jokes at the expense of those listening, (8) do not try to have your own way, (9) do not lose your temper, (10) do not take the initiative in arguments, (11) smile pleasantly, (12) do not talk continually, and (13) do not pry into other people's business. All these trait actions, positive or negative, cluster around the idea of being thoughtful of others. Consequently, adherence to them leads to legitimate popularity.

### *What Traits Men Like in Women*

Women have made some headway in determining the various avenues to popularity with men. Most women know that aside from direct sex appeal there are definite social skills which they can cultivate that make them more acceptable to men. In a recent book entitled, *Why Men Like Us*, Louise Paine Benjamin has set forth some of these traits. They are based upon the statements of men themselves. According to the findings, a girl need not be beautiful in order to attract the better men. But she must have good taste, poise and bearing, including good posture. Of the more tangible personality qualities the girl needs to exhibit good humor, sportsmanship, loyalty, a gracious manner, and a capacity for love. These traits are needed in addition to the universally desirable qualities of interest in others and an extrovertive attitude.

Things that women do that make them unpopular with men include unnecessary use of cosmetics, being late for appointments, chronic kicking, excessive public drinking, use of ridicule as a weapon, evading responsibility, breaking promises for trivial reasons, and boasting of their popularity with other men. All of these are actions that can be regulated by women who are not too deeply absorbed in their own importance. Intelligent attention to these social skills will tend to guarantee the approval of other women as well as of men.

### *Bad Manners and Being Liked by Others*

Finally, we would mention that legitimate popularity, with its attendant feeling of being wanted, is greatly promoted by the possession of good manners. We mention some that are perhaps representative. The author has often made it a point to observe the ways in which people do or do not consider the comfort of others. Although the majority of people appear to be reasonably considerate, it is surprising how many are crudely indifferent to the common rights of their neighbors. In a railway coach, for example, some sprawl over much more than half of the seat and only grudgingly make room for another passenger. Others may fail to close the door to the smoking compartment. Still others open windows on cold evenings directly in front of persons whose comfort they fail even to consider. In a way these seat

hogs and fresh air fiends are to be pitied because they are indulging in a negative type of program that is sure to lead to more and more unpopularity. The same thing is true of people who are discourteous in traffic on the highway. All these bad manners are forms of self centeredness that invite the dislike of others.

According to actual evidence one can make himself thoroughly disliked by talking continually, or loudly, or both. One of the greatest bores is the pest who waxes loud and rasping in his speech and who thinks nothing of breaking breezily into conversations. Another nuisance is the simple soul who continually asks people to repeat what they have just said. We could mention also the individual who is constantly speaking to others about their moral duty or who is always trying to convert others to his personal beliefs. All of these action traits are childish forms of self advertising that irritate mature personalities and that lead directly to hearty dislike. Bad manners, all the way from needlessly blowing one's nose at meal time to thoughtlessly stepping in front of others in a line, are signs of crude self concern. They indicate indifference for the rights and finer sensibilities of fellow beings. How people who indulge in these crudities rate among their neighbors is obvious. In terms of cause and effect they are building a perfect set up for unpopularity. By following the simple principles of courtesy, deference to others and refinement of manners all of us can win the approval of those *who are in a position to determine our social rating*.

#### IV HOW DOES LIKING PEOPLE CONTRIBUTE TO PERSONALITY?

Men and women who like people are usually sincere, intelligently trusting and spontaneously friendly. They radiate good will, are inclined to serve in many modest ways and seem disposed to share freely without thought of reward. Such people represent balanced extroversion at its best and possess the qualities making for good adjustment. They are as happy as one can well be in a world such as this. Their needs have been reasonably well met. They experience a minimum of emotional stress.

#### *The Prevalence of Crude Living*

The dream of idealists that society will be reformed through wholesale adjustment of the individuals composing it, while com-

mendable, is fraught with many obstacles. Splendid personalities have been and are being produced, but there is so much moral indifference, so many blasé standards of honor, and such a crude state of ethics in some quarters as to suggest that we have a major problem on our hands in the matter of raising the level of constructive living. Widespread evidence of standardless living is most disturbing to our proposed program of sturdy personality building. Extreme opportunists are exploiters of honest people. They are so subtly deceitful in their dealings that all of us must watch them with more or less distrust. They do little without thought of personal gain. It is from their ranks that we recruit our manipulators of skin games, frauds, bunco-schemes, and rackets in general. These are the men who live by their wits. They love to fleece strangers and may even take advantage of opportunities to exploit an acquaintance.

Somewhat like these crude opportunists but less of a menace, are the thousands of men and women who live a reasonably decent life merely because the law demands it. They behave themselves only because they are afraid of the punishments that might result if they go too far. These are unfortunate personalities who lack socialized convictions and fundamental moral standards. They live on a flexible, shifting program of getting by. To them the end always justifies the means. They are basically individualistic and immature. Frankly, they do not like people except for what they can get out of them. Their pretenses of friendship sometimes appear real but when an acid test of loyalty is encountered their attachment turns out to be superficial.

### *The Wholesale Improvement of Human Nature*

Attempts at individual and wholesale remedies of low social standards have been numerous and varied. The most impressive attempt, if we interpret history aright, has been that promulgated by religion especially the Christian religion. Christian ethics has always advocated most ardently the virtues of love, fellowship, charity and unselfish service. According to Christianity's central principle, love for mankind lies at the very heart of individual and group welfare. The truthfulness of this doctrine has been generally conceded. Yet we must admit that all religions combined have not been able to transform the lives of the masses of men and women. Some attribute this fact to the weakness of

religion itself. Others are inclined to blame man for failing to avail himself of these constructive influences. The view taken depends largely on one's prejudices in the religious field. Be that as it may, religion has not transformed the race. We are still burdened with lawlessness, neuroticism and social unrest. This fact does not of course prove that much more social maladjustment would not exist if the principles of Christian living were not practiced by some.

Most modern churches, including the regular Protestant and Catholic institutions, are still urging the doctrine of love as the basis of social living. If by some magic we could rub Aladdin's Lamp and reform a major share of our society in terms of this doctrine, the benefits to all of us would be incalculable. Such a movement would certainly exert a check on our present harvest of war, crime, intolerance, poverty and comparable forms of human unhappiness. They would vanish in a widespread disposition to *work for the welfare of society as well as that of the self*. There would be a reversal of the self-centered (ego-centric) in favor of a society-centered (socio-centric) point of view, so far as individual behavior is concerned.

### *How Good Personality Must Be Attained*

Experience has indicated, however, that only people of certain temperaments and backgrounds become changed through religious experience in favor of a life of fervent service. We wish it were otherwise. Certainly great masses of humanity are not likely to be completely revamped by exhortations of advocates of the religious life. Many people will no doubt be greatly benefited thereby, but few wholesale conversions are likely to result. The deeply intrenched attitudes of years of living are not easily changed. The development of good character and personality represents the work of a lifetime.

The principles of behavior advocated by the religious life are applicable to all, but cannot, under existing conditions, be expected to operate as a general pattern in people of widely different attitudes. As we have said before, it is our conviction that we cannot look to mass miracles for a reversal of life attitudes of long standing. We must rest our case with the possibility of rearing children under such psychologically sound conditions as will tend to guarantee the development of well-adjusted men.

and women. If we are to improve the race we must build *socialized* personalities who will evolve a truly organized society. Persons of certain temperament will occasionally accomplish a thoroughgoing reversal of chronic egoism, but for the most part the race will have to be improved through the introduction of more adequate child rearing and other educational methods. Such progress can, of course, be greatly accelerated through the gradual self-improvement of that host of moderately unadjusted men and women who can, if properly motivated, carve out far finer personalities than they now possess.

### *The Handicaps to Loving People*

In the meantime we must recognize many handicaps to loving people, aside from the natural inclination to favor the self and the general disregard for ethics and morals of which we have already spoken. Early learnings have brought about prejudiced attitudes among peoples. These prejudices include attitudes toward various races, toward social institutions, politics, creeds, cults, vices, moral codes, and the laws that govern us. Our attitudes toward all these aspects of life will determine our capacity for dealing intelligently with people. There are also the fears, worries, biases, suspicions, and doubts that limit all of us in our efforts to adjust satisfactorily to the more intimate requirements of our world. These factors, together with the natural tendency to like only those who favor us, make it genuinely difficult for us to extend our love much beyond the confines of our immediate friends and associates. That is about as far as love for humanity usually goes.

## V HOW CAN PSYCHOLOGICAL OIL EASE THE SOCIAL MACHINERY?

### *Human Nature and a Finer Society*

As we bring to a close this phase of our discussion of *Personality and Life*, we can hardly refrain from visualizing a picture of what human relations would be like if the public at large would put into practice only a few of the simpler principles of dealing with people. If all of us would give serious attention to the practice of recognizing our associates' need for satisfaction of the desire to be considered worthy and successful, there would be far fewer inferiority complexes than we are now witnessing.

If all of us would practice the social technique of helping our associates with their problems we would soon enjoy a degree of popularity that would dispense with any need on our part to drug feelings of insecurity. By being men and women of our word and by building up rather than damaging our acquaintances' feeling of security, we could greatly strengthen our relations with them. In short, if we would harmonize with the needs of human nature as they involve a balance of egoistic and socialized living, we would automatically bring about a social situation characterized by good will and solid friendships.

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## VIII. PATCHING BROKEN PERSONALITIES

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From what has been said it should be clear that much can and has been done to improve the personalities of moderately introverted and otherwise unadjusted men and women. The question naturally arises as to what is being done to understand and deal with individuals who are more definitely afflicted, those with that form of personality disturbance called *neurosis*.

In a volume of this scope we can hope to touch on only a few of the principal considerations involved, but we believe that even a brief treatment of the work being done by psychologists in this field will serve to throw light on the problems of adjustment all of us are called upon to face.

The plan we shall follow will be in terms of the following questions:

- I What Relation Exists between Psychiatry and Scientific Psychology?
  - II. What Does Psychology Tell Us about Nervous Disorders?
  - III What Can Psychology Do about Nervous Disorders?
  - IV. What Methods Does Psychology Use in Correcting Disorders?
  - V. What Is the Future of Psychological Service?
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## VIII PATCHING BROKEN PERSONALITIES

### WHAT RELATION EXISTS BETWEEN PSYCHIATRY AND SCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGY?

In this chapter it is proposed to give the reader an insight into the work of specialists who are seeking to understand and deal intelligently with the processes involved in such afflictions as nervous breakdowns chronic malingering (pretended illness) and various neurotic disorders. We shall say something about the methods that are being developed for the relief and rebuilding of those who are suffering from these more serious personality disturbances. Although the discussion may appear to fall outside the sphere of normal personality improvement it deals with disorders that are very common and which if unchecked lead to a marked loss of efficiency and a great deal of unhappiness. Besides it has been the author's experience that most students are very much interested in the quirks of human nature involved in the various nervous disturbances. They are anxious to understand the causes and possible correction of these personality disorders.

#### *Qualifications for Dealing with Nervous Disorders*

Who is qualified to deal with the disorders involved in neuroses? It is true that constructive mental hygiene practice is the duty of parents teachers employers and anyone else who makes vital contacts with people. Yet the rebuilding of broken personalities in its more difficult aspects at least is a professional field requiring the services of properly educated and experienced specialists.

There has been much controversy over the technical education and clinical experience necessary for efficient work in this field. Some regard medical training as absolutely necessary to success while others, pointing to the social and psychological nature of personality disorders emphasize the importance of a thorough knowledge of the causes and processes of emotional disturbance. These opposing positions are obviously motivated by equally different views regarding the causes of so-called men-

latter will be called upon to serve in behalf of individuals who are suffering primarily, as far as can be determined, from emotional and not from physical disorders. It is to the trained psychologist that we look for information and service concerning the milder nervous afflictions.

## II WHAT DOES PSYCHOLOGY TELL US ABOUT NERVOUS DISORDERS?

Workers who are struggling with problems of health are everywhere expressing concern over the steady increase in what are popularly called nervous disorders. These are the baffling personality disturbances that puzzle the doctors because they seem to be independent of any physical disease. They are psychological ills occurring in the lives of people who appear to possess reasonably sound physical bodies. Of course, many nervous symptoms are accompanied by physical disturbances, and several forms of insanity are associated with definite body lesions, infections, germ invasions, and other physical disorders. General paresis (syphilis of the brain), with its breakdown of cortical tissue, is a case in point.

### *Functional Personality Disorders*

There are, however, many nervous symptoms which, because of their apparent psychological nature, have been labeled as *functional*, that is, disturbances of feeling, thought, and action rather than of the physical body. Such ills are many and include phobias (unreasonable fears), feelings of anxiety, depression, deep self-consciousness, insomnia (sleeplessness), moodiness, sensitiveness, compulsions (uncontrollable acts), obsessions (uncontrollable thoughts), irrational weeping, functional deafness and stammering, anaesthesias (insensibility of the skin), amnesia (loss of memory), hysterical paralysis, trance states, and sexual weakness. These are human disorders that baffle physicians. Since these disturbances represent deep-lying tensions in the emotional life of the sufferer, their prevention and cure, where possible, call for services of men schooled in an understanding of mental, emotional, and other psychological processes. These disorders are problems for psychiatrists and scientific psychologists.

tal and emotional disorders. Certain medical men take the position that nervous disorders are for the most part rooted in anatomy, physiology, pathology, and chemistry. If this be true, it is apparent that those who work with neurotics should be men or women schooled in a knowledge of infectious diseases, the control of alcoholism, and the prevention and treatment of physical disturbances induced by syphilitic and toxic infections. Under these conditions mental hygiene practice would be practically synonymous with preventive medicine, and the medical man would be the ideal mental hygienist.

### *The Nature of Psychological Disorders*

However, as the reader no doubt realizes, there is another supremely important side to this matter—the social sphere of life in which so many serious emotional disorders and personality break-ups apparently have their origin. No practitioner who is not well informed in the field of psychological processes can hope to cope with the intricate personal problems presented. A large percentage of the patients coming to the average physician are suffering from psychological disorders. These disturbances suggest bodily diseases, but are nervous symptoms of a nature beyond the ability of the average physician to handle successfully unless he has had psychological or psychiatric (medical study of mental diseases) training. Some workers have insisted that it should be as unlawful for the average medical man to attempt psychological practice as it is for the non-medical psychologist to practice medicine.

Personality disturbances have many varied aspects. Their medical phases are closely tied in with social problems that are difficult to handle, as the control of syphilis illustrates. Behavior problems are frequently associated with factors pertaining to health, morals, social standards, home conditions, and various other influences. The preferred education for successful work with personality disorders might well include medicine, general psychological theory, and a thorough study of both organic and psychological diseases. Psychiatrists and others who have specialized in a study of serious psychological disorders represent an approach to this ideal. But they are often so engrossed in the diagnosis and care of outright cases of insanity that they lack

interest in and sometimes knowledge of the processes of abnormal behavior in milder forms. In short being medical men psychiatrists are usually capable of dealing with institutional and severe mental cases of both an organic and psychological variety but they are frequently somewhat out of their sphere when dealing with many cases of mild nervousness growing out of social problems and unhealthy emotional experiences found in home school and community life

### *Needed Cooperation in Psychological Work*

The varied aspects of human problems call for the cooperative work of all of these specialists—physician psychiatrist psychologist and perhaps a social worker. It would be preferable to develop thoroughly capable men who possess a broad knowledge and operative skill in all phases of human adjustment individuals who have mastered the whole difficult science of man. As things now stand however society is dependent upon the services of specialists in the various aspects of physical and psychological processes. Physicians are called upon to care for those in need of medical services whenever possible sending neurotic or psychopathic (insane) cases to the psychiatrist. The psychiatrist is of course in a position to render maximum service in the case of patients suffering from mental disorders be they of physical or psychological origin or both.

The non medical psychologist is properly prepared to serve in that large field of personality disturbances which includes such emotional disorders as conflicts with society conflicts with self abnormal fears tantrums stuttering inferiority feelings nervous illnesses and numerous other forms of friction incidental to man's efforts to relieve his tensions. The psychologist is interested primarily in rebuilding emotionally unstable personalities. He may be regarded as a specialist in those psychological problems which beset people who are normal in the so-called mental disease sense but who are suffering from disorders of an emotional type. The scientific psychologist seeks to diagnose and control personality disturbances as they appear in the behavior of individuals who are neither physically ill nor mentally diseased. Until such time as medical men and psychologists unite their work in the common cause of individual and social betterment the

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### *The Causes of Nervous Symptoms*

The reader is no doubt wondering what causes these mysterious though decidedly troublesome symptoms. If they have no definite physical basis, by virtue of what conditions do they arise? It is not an easy question to answer and in the light of present knowledge the psychologist cannot offer a final explanation. Nevertheless, as a result of study and clinical experience he can offer some suggestions that throw a great deal of light on the matter.

First of all, we should like to mention that too many writers have attempted to explain abnormal behavior without taking into account the urges to action represented by man's driving needs. Many authors have referred to neurotic disturbances as though they were caused by chance development of bad habits or perhaps through too much work or responsibility. None of these agencies is a real cause of acute neurosis and should be regarded merely as an occasional contributory factor.

So far as is known, all of man's behavior, be it normal, doubtful or positively abnormal, is at all times designed, either consciously or unwittingly, to bring about an adjustment to some aspect of his fundamental needs. *Neurotics, delinquents, or persons suffering from any other form of personality disorder, are but human beings in search of satisfactions that promise to assist them in solving their problems.* All maladjusted individuals are seeking ways to find that feeling of security and that realization of life needs that they have failed to achieve in constructive ways. Out of harmony with people and with their environment, they are merely trying to relieve their tensions and give balance to their lives.

### *Consequences of the Existence of Needs*

It will be recalled from the discussion in our first chapter that man is characterized by three basic needs which apparently provide the motive for his ceaseless activities: (1) the need for maintaining physical well being by satisfying the inner stresses set up by hunger, thirst, pain, fatigue, loss of sleep, excessive heat or cold, and the like, (2) the need to achieve personal recognition, self-expression, success, distinction, and individuality—the ego-motive, and (3) the all too frequently

unrecognized need to nurture and care for others who come within the range of an individual's daily activities. This is the social motive which is expressed by offering sympathy, recognition and selfless service to one's associates. Another need that democracies hold to be fundamental is that of reasonable *freedom* to plan and carry out one's own career and at the same time have a voice in the framing of the policies that are to govern his life.

Although human beings differ markedly in the extent to which their happiness depends upon the satisfaction of any one of these basic needs, each is dependent for the integrity of his personality upon a reasonably balanced satisfaction of all. Excluding the physical group of life necessities, we can say with considerable certainty that *no individual of normal intelligence can confine his activities wholly to the second or the third group and continue to maintain a balanced personality*. That is to say, one cannot in a world such as ours live a wholly self-centered or completely selfless life in the sense of ignoring the personal need for success and recognition and remain psychologically normal.

### *Importance of Balanced Satisfaction of Needs*

From a too great neglect of one or the other of these complementary basic motives *neurotic symptoms arise*. In the activities of the well-adjusted person the legitimate ego need for recognition as a person of worth and the need for offering generous social service blend into a fine balance. This blend is well illustrated in family life where personal recognition and sympathetic care are logical companions.

Neurotic behavior and hysterical (nervous) symptoms arise out of a state of unnecessary but very real antagonism between basic egoistic and social motives. Emotional conflicts arise when either one of these motives is excessively suppressed or *when the kind of early training experienced has been such as to prevent the possibility of becoming independent and successful on the one hand and generous and socialized on the other*.

The miser is not only unpopular but unhappy in his greed and frequently displays neurotic symptoms. He suffers from psychological pain due to too much self-reference and too little recognition of the needs of others. On the other hand the harshly dominated child from whom strict obedience and ex-

treme humility are demanded, may as a result of an almost complete suppression of his desire for personal recognition develop such symptoms as excessive daydreaming morbid sensitivity, inferiority, and anorexia (loss of appetite) These maladjusted persons may develop *functional disorders*, such as stomach ailments heart palpitations muscle tremors, stiff necks and numerous such nervous symptoms without themselves knowing what brought them about

### *Characteristics of the Neurotic Personality*

We begin to see the picture of the neurotic person When confronted with unpleasant situations from which he cannot flee with honor, he develops a headache or some other form of illness He escapes responsibilities by pleading or inducing weaknesses which are intended to remove any social disfavor that might be imposed As he continues to use *pretended physical weaknesses* to escape responsibilities he heads straight for that chronic type of neurosis commonly called a nervous breakdown Step by step his state of nervousness leads him to move within an increasingly limited area of social environment and to attempt to dodge the problems which his limited world presents The neurotic meets his inescapable obligations with feelings of inferiority and lack of confidence He comes to attack his problems emotionally instead of intelligently to be extremely cautious about physical or social activity and to be resentful of the consequences to which his actions or lack of activity may lead The neurotic escapes more and more from even the *common disturbances* of his environment and finally turns his energy almost completely in upon himself there to build a dream world into which he can find an outlet for his brooding Such may be the ultimate outcome of starting down the wrong road in the quest of satisfaction for the requirements of life

### *How People Contract Nervous Symptoms*

A point of extreme significance for an understanding of nervous disorders should be grasped at this point It is this *The neurotic purposely or unwittingly (usually the latter) adopts a nervous symptom in an effort to solve his problem to satisfy a thwarted need* Just how his symptoms serve him is sometimes



fairly apparent, but in other cases it is baffling in the extreme. We suppose that in his inner life somewhere the individual gains freedom from ego loss by adopting them. There is little doubt that, as Dr. White\* has suggested, the neurotic wishes his physical disorders into existence in an effort (1) to escape honorably from a responsibility, as the introvert who develops intense feelings of fatigue to prevent having to work, (2) to attract attention, as the neglected mother-in-law who becomes feeble to prevent her son-in-law from moving to another house with his wife, and (3) to cover up some personal deficiency such, for example, as a lack of initiative or earning power, as the man who calls himself a genius but never produces a painting or literary work to justify his claim.

At a time of great strain the nervous patient adopts a peculiar type of behavior, which we recognize as neurotic, as a compensation for a recognized need (often the danger of further self-abasement). The neurotic is naturally inclined to hold on to his symptom until the underlying causes of his disorder are removed. The nervous patient frequently does not want to get well. Being immature in his emotional nature and unable to adapt himself to the ordinary requirements of social living, he clings to the symptoms which serve to shield him from the necessity of trying to face his problems and satisfy his various social obligations. He may even pride himself that his nervous system is so delicately balanced and high-strung that it cannot be expected to cope with such responsibilities as vocational callings, marriage, biological functions, and menial tasks.

The neurotic further deludes himself into believing that there is something physically wrong with his nerves—that they are about to crack up. He makes the remark that his nerves are driving him mad. Actually there is nothing physically disturbed about the nerve tissue of a neurotic. This part of his body tissue is apparently in just as healthy a condition as in the case of a wholesome, well-adjusted individual. The truth is that nervousness is a psychological disorder, an emotional instability. The victim is in the throes of an attempted escape from his own internal stresses and strains. He is running away from life, peo-

\* Wendell White, *The Psychology of Dealing With People*. The Macmillan Company, 1936, pp. 199-214.

ple, and responsibilities. The chronic neurotic unconsciously develops a convenient collection of nervous symptoms which may enable him to enslave all those around him.

### *Why Some People 'Don't Want to Get Well'*

These processes explain the difficulty met by psychologists in their efforts to remove neurotic symptoms. Consciously or unwittingly, patients often seem loath to part with the stammering, the tendency to develop illnesses, or the desire to pamper themselves which have served as emotion balancing processes (saved them from further ego loss).

As previously mentioned, during the World War a large number of emotionally unstable soldiers were torn between the necessity of going over the top — thus endangering their lives — and an intense desire to avoid the stigma of being regarded as cowards. They actually developed various forms of functional (nervous) blindness, deafness, or paralysis. These avenues of escape solved their conflicts perfectly. The men were committed to the safety of the hospital without in any way losing face with their comrades or their own consciences. Their *wished* physical disorders removed the need of facing the painful war issue. Incidentally, when the war was over these hysterical symptoms soon disappeared.

In our own practice we have met many interesting cases of nervous disability. One young woman, a stenographer, who had been denied much of the recognition that girls crave, had picked up a case of hand contracture (stiffness). Whereas under other circumstances her left hand functioned perfectly, whenever she approached the typewriter it became stiff and clenched. Oddly enough when the hand began to yield to psychological treatment, she did not appear to be particularly pleased. The young lady was losing the one outstanding feature that provided her with special notice and sympathy. The psychologist was taking something away that she unwittingly cherished, that she had fancied she needed to effect her life adjustment.

Much the same may be said of a young mechanic who had developed severe muscle twitchings in the vicinity of his abdomen so that he feared he was going to die. When the condition was cleared up by a psychologist, he did not even come back to thank his benefactor.

### *Why Neurotics Are Unhappy*

Clinical experience has shown that most neurotics are individuals who have missed the recognition and experience of being wanted which every human being desires. Their energies and interests have been turned in upon themselves, there to intensify the feelings of self-consciousness and self pity which lead to emotional abnormality. Self interest and lack of attractive social habits have forced them into introversion and neurosis. Without being wholly responsible for their plight, neurotics reap a harvest of unhappiness. It is no wonder that increased attention is being devoted to a study of their problems. Much can be done to prevent and correct neurotic tendencies through self help. It is to a consideration of this that we turn our attention in the next section.

### III WHAT CAN PSYCHOLOGY DO ABOUT NERVOUS DISORDERS?

We see what the psychologist must attempt to do for victims of neurotic disorders. Those who are suffering from excessive thwarting of the deep-seated desire to be regarded as persons of worth and individuality must experience a gradual development of confidence. The first step is the planning of experiences in which the individual is befriended. Second, the client is assisted in developing socially effective skills by means of which he gains approval and recognition from others. Only in this way can his ego-motive be legitimately satisfied.

There are those who as a result of unfortunate home rearing, have developed an abnormal sense of self-concern which prevents the growth of sympathetic and tolerant action toward people. These individuals, too, must balance their personalities by learning to let their energies flow out away from themselves into channels of action for people, with people, and in social settings. Only in this way can they square with their true natures and avoid the emotional rebound of ego-centric living.

#### *What the Psychologist Must Do for Neurotics*

In the case of neurotic persons, the psychologist first of all leads the patient's energies away from inward thinking, from morbid

self analysis and from physical inaction. The psychologist realizes that restoration to normal personality depends upon a re-establishment of harmony and balance among life motives. Thus he proceeds to lay out for the patient a definite plan of social living designed to give him concrete practice in performing those acts which are conducive to social acceptance and which are known to be characteristic of people who are happily adjusted to their associates. The patient is taught to set up worthy life goals toward which to strive, to ferret out the facts about himself which will help him in his efforts to realize these goals and to develop the personality qualities and skills that are necessary to their achievement.

Step by step the client is led to get his thoughts off himself and on the world of affairs and people. If he is sensitive to criticism he is taught diplomatically to invite criticism and then as a matter of practice to take it thoughtfully and without undue emotion. *If the criticism is true the patient is instructed to attempt the necessary changes in his life.* Unfair criticism is shown to be an indication of poor personality on the part of the giver and thus of no serious import to the patient. When the patient has been cynical toward a certain person he is given practice in showing a generous attitude and is urged to make a friend of the individual. These acts are recommended as personality exercises.

As the client becomes more stable and extrovertive (socially more pliable and relaxed) he is encouraged to join some social organization where he can serve the group. He is assisted in developing skills and hobbies that bring him friends and favorable recognition. He is urged to attend social functions where he can secure practice in *making the affair as pleasant as possible for others not for himself* and to identify himself with some social or religious cause so that he can throw himself more thoroughly into channels of service to human needs. As the client becomes more and more a man (or woman) of action he multiplies those acts which bring assistance to other people, moves in social groups, develops desired skills and engages in recreational pastimes. Gradually he breaks off extreme mother or father attachments, develops financial independence, believes in the trustworthiness of people and joins in campaigns or commu-

nity betterment moves. As he learns to do things which he does not naturally enjoy but which contribute to the well being of his fellows, the individual experiences a progressive improvement in his personality, reflected in an invigorating feeling of personal security.

### *An Example of Personality Rebuilding*

The results that may be attained by working faithfully at the above program are exemplified by the case of a young book keeper who had become so absorbed in his own troubles that he could not deal with people well enough to hold a position. This young man was constantly condemning his associates, brooding over his lack of success, blaming his wife for his unhappiness in the home, and poring hopefully over books on philosophy and psychology. When he came to our office he was unemployed, emotionally tense, and in the throes of a defeatist complex. The reader can see the personality picture—one of physical inactivity, continuous self-analysis, emotional instability, goalless living, and intellectual futility. This man was living in direct opposition to the true recipe for happiness. His interests were largely self centered, he had little place for socially directed activity. As far as he was concerned society could go hang, he had all he could do worrying about his own problems.

Under the influence of a consistent program in which he was taught point by point to transform his energy into action in the form of physical and social skills, this man emerged gradually from his neuroticism into a constructive life of balanced living. But he had to be taught—against strong opposition from his introverted personality—such skills as lending himself to the pleasures of others at socials, greeting office workers as though he were glad to see them, and asking newsboys about their problems. He learned to take flowers to his wife, play with his little girl, take vigorous physical exercise, and converse patiently with people whose personalities and views he disliked. He finally came to do things that he did not want to do, to be active instead of passive, to be a *doer* instead of a constant reader and thinker about himself. Furthermore he managed to develop a life perspective that was broad enough to include new goals toward which to strive as well as a true understanding of the psychological nature of his difficulty.

### *Why the Neurotic Must Act, Not Read*

Certain methods of personality rebuilding should be clarified further. Let us take the matter of reading. We have found it necessary to discourage it in connection with the treatment of neurotics. Reading, when engaged in purposefully by normal or only slightly disordered personalities, with the objective of learning more about the processes of human nature as they operate under conditions of stress, is, of course, valuable. This is especially true if the person concerned can think and act unemotionally about his or her problems. It is also the case when the material read is constructive in that it encourages *doing something* about problems rather than merely *knowing* more about inferiority complexes, infantile repressions, escape mechanisms, and other negative suggestions. It is when unstable people indulge in a good deal of morbid self analysis through books that reading along psychological and philosophical lines becomes pernicious. Such reading frequently enables the victim to find, or to think he has found, more things that are wrong with him. Besides, it encourages him in his inaction. The effects of reading for self help depend upon the severity of the case involved and upon the type of book read.

### *The Dangers of Excessive Self examination*

Many of the same principles hold for self-examination. For an intelligent person to study his strong and weak points with a view to making needed improvements is fine. But for an unhappy neurotic to attempt to fathom the details of his 'inner mental machinery' is frequently dangerous. What the latter individual needs is practical life goals and interests toward which to work and some kind of urge to motivate him to action in striving to realize them. Positive, constructive thinking is good, but appropriate action, in the case of neurotics, is infinitely better.

We would emphasize strongly the principle that sound health based on vigorous bodily activity is fundamental to the correction of nervousness. The morbid, self-centered person is usually physically inactive. The happy, socialized extrovert is almost always busy in affairs involving much bodily action. A sluggish body is not conducive to an optimistic outlook on life. Unhappy attitudes are not often found in a well-conditioned, thoroughly

exercised body It stands to reason that afflicted individuals can greatly aid their condition by the simple plan of engaging in frequent and stimulating bodily exercise Such a program serves as well to develop the wholesome type of fatigue so conducive to relaxed and restful sleep

#### IV WHAT METHODS DOES PSYCHOLOGY USE IN CORRECTING DISORDERS?

##### *What Individuals Need Psychological Help?*

It must not be supposed that markedly unstable persons yield to psychological treatment with ease On the contrary, it frequently takes much time and strenuous effort to bring about even a fraction of the improvement desired Unstable personalities have been long in the making, and strong attitudes have developed that resist change The patient can hardly be expected to give up a nervous symptom helpful to him before he has learned a way of life that enables him to get along without it The well known inferiority complex, for example, is sometimes a device used by persons with abnormal egos as a corrective measure to help them from going to extremes in their self-conceit Intelligent treatment usually consists of gradually reducing the ego, not of bolstering up the feeling of deficiency as frequently attempted

Although it is certainly true that in the end each neurotic must by personal effort work out his (or her) own salvation psychologically, it should be recognized that he can improve himself more quickly and satisfactorily with the assistance of a trained psychologist or psychiatrist For these deeply afflicted individuals the psychologist has developed certain correction methods that have proved successful

We shall describe briefly some of the rebuilding techniques that seem most promising at the present time We do not include complete psychoanalysis and certain other approaches used by some psychologists and practitioners The methods described are those the author and others have used in clinical practice No assumption is made that they are the only useful or even the best procedures that could be employed We only say that they have been found helpful and that they represent a good start in the

important field of personality reconstruction. In addition to the psychological diagnosis or examination, the methods in question include psychological instruction, oral suggestion, unconditioning, general relaxation, negative practice, environment control, and combinations of these methods.

### *The Psychological Examination*

It is clear, of course, that in the case of any disorder, physical, psychological, or a composite of the two, a thorough diagnosis must be made in an effort to determine the factors that are operating to cause the state of imbalance of which the patient's troubles are symptoms. This procedure has been followed for many years in the medical field and is now being duplicated as thoroughly as possible in dealing with people who are suffering from psychological disorders. The psychologist must have the facts about his patient's background and present condition. In order to obtain these facts he utilizes three sources of information: (1) data secured from standard psychological tests that have been constructed by university men and validated by scientific procedures, (2) facts about the patient which he himself discloses confidentially in response to questions or in telling his story, and (3) information secured from relatives or friends of the client who are authorized to throw additional light on his case.

From the clinical picture which this information usually enables the psychologist to develop, he draws plans for remedial measures. Since the experiences of early life leave their imprint upon and influence the trend of personality development, he gathers facts about the patient's childhood history. When it is evident that the causes of difficulty are no longer operative and when the procedures necessary to a program of rebuilding seem reasonably apparent, no effort is made to psychoanalyze the patient or to dig out all the details of his early life. Experience and good judgment will usually indicate to what length one need go in this matter.

Scientific tests enable the psychologist to secure much valuable information concerning the various aspects of personality disorders. Being to a fair degree reliable and valid, the scores yielded by these tests are very useful in diagnostic work. To date those that have been used most widely in clinical practice with adults measure the traits of personality commonly called



self-sufficiency (capacity for self-direction), introversion-extroversion, social dominance, emotional stability, and to some extent self-determination. General adjustment tests measure health, home, social, and emotional adjustments. The more comprehensive and diagnostic *personality* and *social adjustment* tests measure the presence or absence of such components of self-adjustment as self reliance, sense of personal worth, sense of freedom, feeling of belonging, freedom from withdrawing tendencies, and freedom from nervous symptoms. On the social-adjustment side, such tests measure the presence of social knowledge, social skills, freedom from anti-social attitudes, home relations, school relations, and community relations.

*Mental ability* tests measure the phase of personality that indicates the individual's ability to learn. In addition psychologists frequently construct their own tests that are helpful in measuring *neurotic tendency*, *self-consciousness*, and *marriage adjustment*. Although not as reliable as the standardized measuring devices, these tests are often valuable as supplementary fact finding tools.

With the evidence from test scores, and facts gained from conferences with the individual before him, the psychologist proceeds to lay out his plans for the client's treatment. First, he decides what changes should, if possible, be brought about in the attitudes of the client. Second, he attempts to bring about such changes in the environment of the client as are likely to be conducive to better adjustment. The psychologist is then ready to plan the instructions or treatment which he will need to give as well as the program of active effort that the client must carry out.

### *Psychological Instruction*

In an earlier section of this chapter we described in detail the instructions relating to goal striving, social action, personality exercises, and general extrovertive behavior that must be given in the case of introverted clients. With chronic neurotics the same instructions and more must be given. These individuals are characterized by a great many inner emotional tensions. They are often honeycombed with emotional prejudices, cherished beliefs, and intense attitudes of one kind or another.

Neurotics often hold moral, social or religious ideals which come to mean so much to them that they cannot keep from becoming intolerant with people who violate them. In fact these

ideals (attitudes) may become so much a part of the neurotic's personality that any denial of them disturbs his ego to the extent that he develops serious symptoms of nervousness. This is another neurotic process that must be taken into account in the plan of action the psychologist lays out for his client. The latter must be assisted in bringing about new attitudes toward the various problems and situations that life presents, that is, he must effect a thorough change in the emotional side of his personality.

One of the author's patients was thoroughly steeped in intense prejudices relating to religion. She was an enemy of all cults and religious orders. At the same time her mother was a Unity practitioner. The reader can imagine the emotional upheavals in the home. Her personality was a network of tensions which naturally aggravated her neurotic condition. With a changed outlook on life brought about by psychological instruction and other corrective methods this client was able to improve sufficiently to get along satisfactorily with her family and with other associates.

### *Oral Suggestion*

Suggestion has long been recognized as a fruitful source of influence for bringing about changes in the attitudes and actions of people. All of us have been led to dislike certain persons because of subtle suggestions concerning their character and personality. Certainly many people have been directly influenced to build homes, to go to college to take trips or perhaps to learn to play a musical instrument as a result of being told of the advantages of so doing. In fact all advertising is based on the principle of influence by suggestion. It is the basis upon which healing cults and so-called scientific religions operate. Religious groups who deny the existence of material things who utilize positive affirmations, and who stress faith healing with its spectacular cures employ various forms of suggestion.

It was to be expected that scientific men would eventually strip from cultist systems their mystic hocus pocus and provide the phenomenon of suggestion (also auto-suggestion—making suggestions to one's self) with a scientifically sound explanation. Today suggestion is regarded as a simple and straightforward method for changing the attitude of an individual toward certain objects people beliefs or situations.

Ordinary suggestion is not sufficient, however, to make even a semblance of the desired changes in the personality of confirmed neurotics. The individual who has been nervous and afraid most of his life cannot, by any stretch of effort or wish, change his attitudes by considering words addressed to him. The principal reason for this fact is that the suggestions offered are almost always met with denials, defenses, and much competition from rival suggestions. Thus the psychologist must, if he hopes to do effective work, find a method for giving strong suggestions under conditions where little or no competition exists. That is to say, *the psychologist must create a situation in which the client is indifferent to all suggestions save the ones by which the psychologist is attempting to change the client's attitude toward his problems.*

The desired method has been found in the phenomenon of relaxation. Practically every individual is able, under quieting influences, to relax sufficiently to become more or less indifferent to things that are going on around him. Under ideal conditions, such as the psychologist can readily create in his office, the client relaxes thoroughly and in so doing narrows down his attention almost entirely to the suggestions which are being given in positive, emphatic, and oft repeated terms. Little or no competition in the form of counter suggestions is encountered. The client merely lets himself become comfortably relaxed while the psychologist "talks in" the desirable personality attitudes. There is *no mystery or psychic influence of any kind involved.* The process is merely one of giving the client, through his sense organs, suggestions that are relayed to the inner attitudes which control his views toward life. The method is science's answer to the occult claims of cultists and fakers. *It draws aside the curtain of mystery from the claims of so-called faith healers.*

Nervous bodily disturbances are often relieved when the patient's attitude toward his problems is changed. The patient gives up his symptoms because he no longer needs them as a protection to his self respect or as a solution to some emotional conflict. Since positive suggestion frequently causes marked changes in attitude, there follow occasionally what seem to be remarkable cures. The disappearance of what appear to be physical symptoms is merely the result of a highly desirable change of attitude in the patient's outlook. The psychologist influences

attitudes as such. The disappearance of a nervous symptom is the natural outcome of the improvement in the "state of mind" induced by the suggestions made.

This explanation suggests the value of psychological assistance in nervous cases where an organic basis for certain supposedly physical ailments cannot be found. It explains the cure in some cases of muscle tremors, stiff necks, hand contractures, stomach ailments, back and shoulder aches, and other such functional ailments. The real value of the oral suggestion technique lies in the opportunity it affords for changing the attitudes of those who are able to relax sufficiently well to benefit by its method.

### *Unconditioning*

The word *conditioned* (or *conditioning*) has reference to the process by which an action, fear, or attitude becomes attached to a life situation (stimulus) which did not originally cause it. Infants, for example, are not naturally afraid of furry animals, but if a dog or a rabbit is shown to a small child *at the same time that he is frightened by a loud noise*, the child, after a few experiences, comes to fear the animal. In other words, the animal, which did not naturally cause fear in the child, comes to do so when shown several times at the moment a loud noise is made. This is the principle of the *conditioned response* and is the most logical explanation of the presence in so many people of fears, prejudices, peculiar beliefs, suspicions, and other attitudes which could not have been inherited. This is especially true when the fears or worries are unreasonable in the sense that they are out of harmony with the facts of the situation which cause them. Consider, as instances, the ten year-old child who is desperately afraid of a very small body of water, and the mature man or woman who cannot bear to step inside of an office building elevator. These attitudes, like fear of speaking before a small group of people, are built in emotional conditionings.

Many persons whose lives have been made burdensome by unreasonable fears come to the psychologist for help. To relieve the difficulty the psychologist often resorts to the method called *unconditioning*. He helps the individual to get rid of the unwelcome fear by a process of gradual elimination. The steps involved are those used by the well known psychologist John B. Watson in the case of the boy, Albert, who had been strongly

conditioned by loud noises against pet rabbits. As a first step, the sight of the rabbit was associated with pleasant experiences by showing it to the boy at a considerable distance while he was enjoying some tasty food. Little Albert looked worried but the distance between him and the rabbit was too great to cause much emotional excitement. Day by day the rabbit was brought gradually closer and closer until finally it was by his side and being played with by another little fellow who had experienced no fear of animals. Although cautious and a bit disturbed throughout the entire procedure, Albert eventually played with the rabbit much as he had done before he was conditioned to be afraid of it.

In this way the psychologist unconditions his adult subject. The man who has come to be abnormally afraid of streets and the outdoors, and for whom everything possible has been done to develop a balanced personality, is taught to approach open air situations gradually and under conditions as conducive as possible (in the company of a friend, for example) to a feeling of security. The client is taught to *do the thing he fears*, but to do it very gradually lest he get a shock that makes him more frightened than ever. This method is especially important with clients who come for help in connection with fear and self-consciousness in public speaking. It is also important in the case of those who have great difficulty in managing themselves in social gatherings. Public-speaking classes frequently violate the most basic principles of dealing with fear by requiring their members to attempt a speech before a *whole group the first time*. This is like putting the fear inspiring rabbit in Albert's lap the first day and thus intensifying the already distressing fear.

In psychological practice clients are enabled to get accustomed to public-speaking experiences by very gradual degrees so gradual in fact that they never experience a shock from the time they begin in a small way until they speak before large groups they have been anxious to face. The client commences by speaking to the psychologist who turns his back if necessary. Soon the client talks face to face to one and two individuals and ends by speaking before gradually enlarged groups. By this method the speaker is systematically relieved of his fears. A university senior who was sorely distressed over his self-consciousness at fraternity dinners solved his problem very satisfactorily by this method.

The same is true of a timid young business man who was often asked to speak at service clubs and at business meetings. The unconditioning method, when used in connection with oral suggestion, has frequently proved its value in severe cases.

### *General Relaxation*

Numbers of people are continually nervous in their physical actions. Some talk loudly, fidget with their hands, or wrap their legs around the legs of chairs when sitting. Others literally push the floor with their feet when riding in a car, hold themselves when lying in bed, and use an excessive amount of energy when picking something up with their fingers. These people are light or restless sleepers. They are easily fatigued, find the noise and bustle of city streets nerve racking, and are generally in a state of muscular hypertension.

The well adjusted man or woman can usually relax when the opportunity presents itself, or could readily learn to do so by following the simple instructions given in Dr. Edmund Jacobson's popular book, *You Must Relax*. Many neurotics, however, no matter how hard they try, cannot reduce their tensions to a satisfactory state of relaxation. They need help from someone who is skilled in the methods described by Dr. Jacobson in his technical book on the subject *Progressive Relaxation*. Some of the more severe cases have been unable to reduce the easily detectable tension in their arms and legs. Others, while lying down, have unknowingly maintained the arm in an upright position when instructed to let it fall relaxed at their side. This is muscular tension with a vengeance, but it is fairly common among nervous people. Such individuals must learn to be tension conscious. They must learn how to relax the various parts of their bodies until a general state of muscular quietness, conducive to thorough rest and sleep, has been achieved.

In contrast to general relaxation there is always the opportunity of relaxing parts of the body, that is, one can reduce the tension in muscles that are not being used while expending enough energy to use those concerned with the work at hand. Let the legs hang as it were while you are operating a typewriter. Permit the arms to be quietly relaxed while you are watching a motion picture. Such relaxation is extremely impor-

tant for nervous people. In many cases, however, they must have professional assistance if they are to succeed in achieving it.

The reasons for stressing physical relaxation should be apparent. What are popularly called 'body' and 'mind' are but related parts of a single human organism. Influences which improve one's mental state have their effects upon the physical structures of the body, and vice versa. Our discussion of the disorders suffered by nervous people has indicated this inseparable relationship between all phases of the personality. Thus muscular relaxation may be thought of as basic to psychological well being. At any rate, clinical experience has shown that extreme muscular tensions are frequently associated with nervous disorders. Well adjusted, efficient people are as a general rule not particularly tense. Mental and physical relaxation appear to be inseparable phases of an ultimate state of personality well being.

The relaxation method is, however, usually prescribed in connection with other psychological procedures. Dr. Jacobson has reported some outstanding results from its single use, but in psychological practice it is ordinarily supplementary to conferences, oral suggestion, negative practice, and other techniques. As preparation for oral suggestion it is unexcelled. The oral suggestion method, in turn, very productive of muscular relaxation.

Many of our cases have gained marked relief from the stresses and tensions of life as a result of learning to relax their bodies. One elderly woman was enabled to deal much more deliberately and tactfully with an irritating neighbor as a result of her recently acquired ability to maintain better poise. This ability she credited in considerable part to the results of her relaxation lessons. A middle-aged magazine writer was able to solve some distressing home problems with more than his usual facility as a result of the state of bodily well being which he achieved by the method of relaxation. But the method seems most productive in the case of stuttering patients. Physical relaxation is necessary for successful speech. Stuttering is known to represent an emotional disturbance of the entire body, it is not often caused by defects in the speech apparatus alone. Speech treatment must be built in large part at least, upon a foundation of muscular as well as emotional relaxation. This has been our experience with chronic speech cases.

immediately reduces a great many inner tensions. He gets himself into at least a partial state of relaxation that is in itself conducive to better speech responses. As Dr Dunlap has pointed out, the *consciously attempted practice* of definite speech defects helps to bring the individual's speech responses under voluntary control. This means that although the individual is stuttering as usual he is doing so *voluntarily* instead of *involuntarily* as before. It is often possible gradually to reduce the violence of the voluntary speech defects while at the same time preventing the appearance of the involuntary ones.

And so it is with tics—the client may overcome his facial contortions much more easily by practising them than by trying to resist them. In the former instance he may *eliminate* spasm producing tensions and achieve voluntary control. By resisting he *creates* the very tensions that cause his difficulties. Stage fright can be controlled best by the simple but effective method of *voluntarily getting as frightened as possible* before having to perform. If the afflicted individual is successful in bringing on a real inner fear upheaval without trying to stop it (encouraging it, in fact), he will usually find that the tensions thus released (not created as by the former resisting method) soon spend themselves and leave him in good condition for efficient speaking or performing. With this form of negative practice we have experienced good results. It may be used in dealing with fear of people, of social functions and of nervous body symptoms. Fearing and fighting nervous symptoms raises tensions while encouraging and practising them robs them of some of their force and hastens their disappearance. The change in the individual's psychological attitude is largely responsible for the results obtained.

### *Environment Control*

If a neurotic is in sharp conflict with his surroundings, some capable person should prescribe a change of environment. Environmental conditions suitable to the patient's welfare and gradual improvement should be arranged. Conditions conducive to continued conflict must be eliminated. In short, the nervous person's environment should be regulated in harmony with his needs. This may mean a complete change such as placing a young delinquent in a foster home or confining a nervous case to a rest home. It may involve merely the removal of irritating



conditions. Perhaps a suffering youth may be freed from a severe school teacher.

This type of control is far different, however, from the old fashioned and doubtful plan of urging the patient to take a rest or go on a trip somewhere. That might be appropriate under certain conditions but it usually means an *escape* from the problems involved. Rest is not in itself a cure. Nevertheless, the psychologist prescribes changes in the patient's regular surroundings when they might contribute to recovery.

In her classical book on problem-case methods, *Three Problem Children*, Mary Sayles tells of the marked improvement made in the life of a girl named Mildred as the result of removing her from the influence of a taunting sister, checking up on a careless father, and creating pleasant school conditions conducive to success and recognition. The story is an interesting one and illustrates well the technique of environmental control. Among our own cases there comes to mind first a young journalist whose hectic work in a newspaper office irritated an already high strung disposition. He also suffered from considerable stammering. A few months of quiet surroundings in a suburban district coupled with psychological training did much to stabilize his personality and to improve his speech disorder.

### *Combinations of Methods*

We should like to emphasize that the methods which we have described are as a rule used in connection with each other, the combination selected being always in harmony with the client's pattern of needs as determined by the psychological examination. Seldom is one line of training or treatment sufficient in itself. Deep self-consciousness, for example, may involve (1) the need of a planned program of extrovertive action, (2) oral suggestion to assist the client in getting started, (3) unconditioning to overcome distracting fears, and (4) physical relaxation to lay the groundwork for the development of poise, and possibly other procedures. There is nothing mechanical or formal about the methods selected. Flexibility and adaptability to actual needs are the ends sought.

Psychologists are by no means limited to the methods mentioned. Some would not care to use certain of these and would introduce others more to their liking. Methods varying all the

way from oriental auto-suggestion to outright psychoanalysis are common. But the interested party should remember that the so-called 'practical,' but unschooled, psychologist is likely to use all sorts of novel methods in an effort to impress the public. The scientifically trained psychologist will always stay close to the accepted and proved techniques of legitimate psychological practices. His sense of professional ethics and his intellectual honesty are safeguards for the confused, unhappy individuals who turn to him in time of trouble. If he is the kind of public servant he should be, the psychologist will not only use every atom of professional skill at his command to assist his clients but will, when the occasion indicates that he should tell them frankly of the limitations of scientific psychology in their particular cases.

### *The Limitations of Psychoanalysis*

Just a word about psychoanalysis, which we have omitted in our list of treatment methods. Some psychologists and psychiatrists use the method and report success with it. Much has been said for and against psychoanalysis, but a few points will suffice to show why some do not include it in their treatment program. In the first place psychoanalysis is not a scientific system being based upon the belief that practically all neurotic symptoms are expressions of repressed childhood desires for sex pleasures (Freud), or the craving for power (Adler). These repressions may be factors in causing neurotic behavior but according to our experience, and that of many other psychologists neurosis is chiefly brought on by the uneven realization of egoistic and social motives. The psychoanalytic doctrine is based upon a much more limited explanation. Psychologists and psychiatrists have found many cases of mild and marked neurosis in which the sexual factor (desire for love) is absent, and in which the desire for power is only indirectly involved. Psychoanalysis is often guilty of over-simplifying complex cases of personality disorder.

In the second place by requiring the patient to search his inner life for hidden and long since forgotten complexes the psychoanalytic method turns his energy in upon himself thus introverting his view of his problems. This is exactly the process that we discourage. Several well known psychologists have ex

pressed the fear that if the client is not suffering from a complex when he goes to the psychoanalyst he is likely to acquire one before he gets away. This fear is justified by the inturbed nature of psychoanalytic methods. Our third objection is that the patient is often asked to continue his treatments over a period of not only months but years making the method quite expensive. Nevertheless we do not care to take too critical an attitude in the matter. Some people have no doubt been helped by psychoanalysis. Perhaps in the hands of competent workers the objections we have mentioned can be overcome to some extent.

### *Value of the Talking It Out Method*

There is one aspect of psychoanalysis however that all of us use upon numerous occasions. We have reference to the treatment method called *catharsis*. By catharsis is meant the unburdening in conversation with the psychologist of as many of his suppressed and disagreeable problems as the patient can remember or cares to disclose. Since these problems frequently involve highly emotional conflicts it is naturally a great relief to the patient to get them off his chest. This is the principle of the confession and explains why people usually feel so relieved after admitting their sins. Individuals differ greatly in the extent to which they are willing to disclose their inner life to professional counselors or psychologists but as a rule everyone feels better as a result of talking things out.

The position of the psychologist is strategic. Intelligent clients usually prefer to confide in persons outside their social circles who are professionally and ethically prepared to help them. Every psychologist—and professional listener—has his clients who apparently must get relief by a periodic unburdening of their troubles. This is a mild form of the deeper catharsis which the psychoanalyst uses almost exclusively in his efforts to cure his patient through the detection and airing of hidden infantile repressions. We are inclined to say however that although the confession or disclosure of present conflicts is frequently valuable to a distressed person the continuous habit of confessing old complexes or sins is likely to be a harmful one. Such a practice opens up old wounds and tends to keep the confessor in a constant state of emotional tension.

## V WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICE?

In summarizing the discussion of the work that scientific psychology is endeavoring to do for people who are suffering from various nervous ailments, we remind the reader that in the main the methods used are designed to assist the individual eventually to work out his own personality improvements. There is no magic in the methods described. They are neither occult, mysterious, nor infallible. They are procedures based upon a scientific study of human nature in both its so-called normal and abnormal aspects. Used intelligently by qualified persons these and similar procedures can be relied upon to do much toward bringing about the desirable changes in thinking, attitudes, and behavior of unhappy persons.

*Why People Resist Psychological Help*

The psychologist knows that even with this equipment, which is admittedly not great, he will meet much opposition from the very persons whom he hopes to help. Many neurotics do not particularly want to get well. Their wished symptoms have often served them well in their efforts to escape from responsibility, to get attention from others, and otherwise to balance their threatened integrity. This type of handicap must always be taken into account in psychological practice. It explains the reluctance of many persons to seek professional help just as self-centeredness prevents extreme introverts from even trying to make friends.

The psychologist is ever trying to motivate his clients to seek a more extrovertive life in which their energies are externalized in the form of social skills and active enterprises. He teaches his clients to find completeness and self-expression in socially desirable activities that involve selfless as well as egoistic action. The psychologist's efforts are continually more or less balked, however, by the natural tendency of humans to cater to their ego-centric interests. It is this introverting or internalizing of interest that keeps many people unhappy (because they are insecure) and the psychologist from realizing success. This is the crux of the problem of adjustment. The psychologist centers his efforts

and methods upon its regulation. It must be recognized however, that the efficiency of his service is limited by this feature of human self interest.

### *Handicaps to Gaining Psychological Help*

External handicaps to the development of psychological service grow out of public interest in the weird and the bizarre. The majority of people like methods that smack of the mysterious, the magical. The common sense, less colorful techniques of the trained medical man or psychologist do not appeal to them. They must have thrills, glamorous advertising and big crowds. Others—and this group is a large one—still feel that there is some odium attached to nervous ills. These people are afraid to come to the psychologist lest they classify themselves as mental cases. It is likely to be some time before people are as unashamed of psychological disorders as they are of physical diseases. At present a traditional and indefensible distinction is made between the two. Many a client has confessed to walking by our outer office door six or seven times before he found courage to come in and acknowledge a common emotional problem.

The enormous number of maladjusted persons who theoretically should visit psychological service centers argues a great wave of business along this line. There are, however, several reasons besides the ones just mentioned for discounting the argument. The field of applied psychology is a new one and is not well known to the public. People know little about discriminating between trained workers and the horde of fakers and cultists who prey on the gullible and the credulous. Furthermore, the trained psychologist must charge a fee which is more than a great many of the patients who will seek his services can afford to pay. It seems that those who apply for psychological help tend to belong to the less fortunate economic classes in society.

Even clients who have been well satisfied (in the sense that they feel repaid for their expenditures) seldom speak of the psychologist's success with them to their friends. This is for the simple reason that these individuals do not want others to know that they have consulted a psychologist. They are afraid of being considered mentally queer. In fact, many people keep a knowledge of their visits from members of their family. They even

caution the psychologist not to write to them or call them on the telephone. Such is the present attitude of an appreciable part of the public toward psychological problems

All these factors operate against the establishment of individual offices or independent psychological service centers. And most medical men have not yet come to understand or be willing to cooperate with trained psychologists. Medical practitioners, psychiatrists, and scientific psychologists could and in the future probably will work together in a cooperative fashion, but that time is not yet. Traditions are difficult to change.

### *Does the Future Hold Socialized Psychology?*

Perhaps the future will bring 'socialized psychology.' This seems to be the trend in medicine. Such a plan would no doubt place psychologists on a salary basis and provide needed service for those who cannot or will not pay current prices. The disadvantages that are often advanced against socialized medicine could no doubt be mentioned in connection with psychology, but it is our belief that some such trend as this is likely to develop. A beginning of free psychological service has already been made in the Trinity Church of Brooklyn, and another progressive metropolitan church is now laying plans for even more comprehensive free service for its parishioners.

All who have an interest in psychological matters will want to watch developments. Thousands of people need help. Many capable young men and women with excellent psychological equipment for service are turned out yearly by our leading universities. How to get clients and counselors together under present economic conditions and how to break down the widespread fear of seeking the appropriate help are the questions before us. Only time can tell how or to what extent these problems will be solved.

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## IX THE VALUE OF A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

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Having come to some practical conclusions regarding the regulation of motives for everyday actions we consider now a plan of life. Almost every individual has some trend of thinking be it a philosophy, a code of ethics, or a religion, which vitally affects his behavior and so becomes a definite factor in the building of his personality.

No matter what the psychologist or anyone else who deals with personality problems adopts as his own moral code, philosophy, or religion, he must face the issues which are raised in personal and social adjustment. It becomes our task, then, to evaluate as fairly as possible the assets for personality balance that reside in this field. Our study can be simplified by a consideration of the following questions:

- I What Is Meant by Pragmatism?
  - II Is Pragmatism a Satisfactory Plan?
  - III Is Religion More Than Morals and Ethics?
  - IV What May Functional Religion Do for Personality?
  - V How May We Maintain Personality Integration?
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## IX THE VALUE OF A PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

### I WHAT IS MEANT BY PRAGMATISM?

The reader need have no fear of the word *pragmatism*. It is not difficult to understand, neither will it lead us into involved academic discussions. Rather, it is going to assist us in gaining an understanding of the philosophy of life responsible for much of the disordered living we observe all around us. An appreciation of its implications should aid us further in planning sound, constructive lives.

The word *pragmatism* comes from the Greek word for *action* and in modern times has been modified to mean essentially *practical*. It has reference to the practical or utilitarian consequences of human actions. It has come to stand for a school of thought which holds that the rightness or wrongness of acts and ideas depends upon the extent to which they work out satisfactorily in forwarding the purposes of their author. In one sense this doctrine has much to commend it since it evaluates all schemes for improvement in terms of the extent to which they actually work. The scientist is a pragmatist when he sets up a tentative principle or hypothesis and proceeds to check its validity by trying it out under controlled conditions. This is the way the psychologist, Edward L. Thorndike, attempted to test his principles of learning in animals and men. Most of our scientific principles as well as our technological developments have been secured by this practical method.

#### *The Contribution of Pragmatism*

Pragmatism has provided a powerful stimulus to scientific study and practice. Indeed it is the handmaiden of nearly all scientific endeavor, including the effort to evaluate the more measurable phases of such social sciences as sociology, psychology, and education. However, as the reader will realize from our previous discussion, science and technology have no direct moral implications. Neither do they set up social objectives or values suitable for giving direction to human progress. Science has developed as a human accessory, without regard to its implications for man's

social and moral adjustment or integrity. Men's basic motives to seek physical comfort and ego satisfaction have driven them to erect a great industrial world, the moral consequences of which they could not foresee. It seems logical that in so doing they should utilize a method of procedure that tests every new step in terms of its practical efficiency.

It is lamentable that the creators of modern society did not endeavor to prove the utility of every mechanical advance step in relation to the larger problem of its ultimate good to society as a whole. Man is like that. Instead of attending to the careful balancing of his own and his children's personal and social adjustment, he frequently proceeds to push his desire for comfort and recognition beyond legitimate bounds. Thus his social or racial motives are neglected or fail to keep pace with material development. The results may be seen in the faltering character of our present social order.

### *Some Dangers in Pragmatism*

Where pragmatism as a philosophy of life has its greatest drawbacks, however, is in the field of character and conduct. One can quickly sense the weakness of reducing the standard of right and wrong in this realm to mere expediency, that is, to judging only by practical consequences. This is to make loyalty and right conduct the servants of opportunity and convenience. It means that we will judge the quality of our acts in terms of how well they help us to get what we are after, be that a college education, a new automobile, a desired mate, a bank account, a high position, or perchance a trip to Europe. The pragmatic view of social behavior, carried to its logical extreme, suggests that any act is defensible if it turns out to be effective in securing the results desired. It is the doctrine that the end justifies the means. We all know what unethical things many people do when they adopt this philosophy.

The critical reader will at once notice that this utility doctrine runs directly counter to the cherished views of so-called conservative people, especially moralists. As one writer put it, mankind has for ages regarded certain truths as basic and enduring. It has been said that the truths of the Christian religion have never been temporary, they are believed to be eternal verities, they appeal to man with an authority that brooks no question, they

are as far removed from the expedient as could well be and for them men would even dare to die \* This is the view of the man who believes that in their broad outlines right and truth are unchangeable principles and that these are binding upon both individuals and groups in all ages and upon all occasions This view is squarely opposed to pragmatism especially in its more individualistic aspect Just what disposition to make of these opposing views in the quest for an avenue to the adjusted life is our task We are not approaching the problem from either a theological or a strictly philosophical angle We shall attempt to judge all aspects of living in terms of their value for socialized personality development

### *The Current Form of Pragmatism*

In its current form pragmatism is essentially a refinement of the rule of pleasure (and profit) as the standard of excellence It is a doctrine which makes standards of right relative to the individuals welfare and dependent for validity upon their effects As the psychologist William James said these standards are subject to interpretation in terms of their practical consequences This is a flexible shifting philosophy that declines to follow any set moral rules Furthermore it infers that anyone who does follow absolute standards is to that extent unintelligent or unsophisticated It substitutes reason for conviction a practice which we found in a former chapter to be precarious both in the field of morals and from the standpoint of social stability The pragmatic view is suited to scientific research but as a moral philosophy it possesses clear shortcomings

Yet pragmatism is accepted by a large number of people unwittingly or otherwise as a guide to conduct and the development of social institutions

### *The Meaning of Crude Pragmatism*

We come now to a consideration of what is meant by crude pragmatism This is an expression which we have coined to explain an important concept relating to personality development

We are serious in saying that pragmatism as usually de-

\* Robert R. Rusk *The Philosophical Bases of Education* Houghton Mifflin Company 1929 p 88

scribed and advocated by competent philosophers, should be designated as "refined." Compared to the brand we are soon to describe, it is decidedly preferable. We do not believe that individual pragmatism, no matter how scientific, is a safe platform for the building of a well-balanced society. Yet in a hypothetical society made up of individuals concerned only with the common good and practising such personal qualities as honor, justice, charity, fellowship, and all-round integrity, it is fair to say that pragmatism might be adequate. Pragmatism could be regarded as a workable doctrine for men and women who are motivated by standards or strong psychological sets in the direction of trying to do what is best in the long run for all concerned. That is to say that a group of individuals who are sensitive to their obligations to be fair and honorable to their fellows, as well as to themselves, might follow a pragmatic conception of right and wrong and still maintain an integrated society.

A pragmatic program is only safe in the hands of a highly organized and thoroughly consistent group of personalities. Probably but a small fringe of our most stable citizens can claim such personalities. Certainly the rank and file of people are not to be trusted with a social code which leaves to their judgment the criterion of what should be done in moral situations. It is hard enough for them to form judgments in matters involving money, property rights, civil justice, social relations, and community enterprises, when they have available definite laws and regulations to guide their decisions.

Here is where pragmatism breaks down. If its morals are too relative and its judgments of right and wrong too flexible in the case of the rank and file of well-meaning but easy-going people, what conditions are we going to find in the case of the thousands of individuals who live by undirected impulse, scattered wits, and biological morals? These people have not enjoyed the kind of early rearing that makes for dependability. They are buffeted about by every wind that blows, "do the other fellow before he does them," and live generally a crude, "get by" form of life. Although they recognize some restraints, such individuals have no solid program of morals, ethics, or social standards by which they are regulated or which control them from within. Their morality is more or less in proportion to the strength of the police force and relative to the chances of getting caught.

This is what we mean by "crude pragmatism." It is the relatively uncontrolled philosophy of life in which expediency based upon ego-centric purposes guides the shifting destinies of the individual. It disregards the rights of others. Persons with this code cannot comprehend fair play, and are scarcely on speaking terms with duty, honor, courtesy, and the other qualities which characterize the socialized individual. To them the man who does what is right because it is expected of him and because there are other people to be considered besides himself is an object of wonder. Crude pragmatists are not necessarily criminals, although criminals are certainly recruited from their ranks, but the good behavior they display is dictated either by hope of reward or by fear of punishment. They have no permanent restraints which inhibit them when it is dark or when no one is around to deter them. So they are given to petty plundering, cheating, deceiving, and the like, whenever appropriate occasions arise.

Such people are clearly a menace to society. There are all degrees of crude pragmatists from the irresponsible citizen to the confirmed criminal. They vary in the amount of damage they do and the inconstancy with which they live, but all are on a sliding scale of behavior in which expediency is the guiding consideration. Their program is insubstantial and fraught with many pitfalls. That is why we are afraid of pragmatism in conduct. Refined and socialized individuals may get along quite well if sufficiently grounded in desirable attitudes toward life. But we can imagine nothing but social chaos if every member of society adopted a pragmatic philosophy.

## II IS PRAGMATISM A SATISFACTORY PLAN?

Crudely pragmatic people are seldom happy. They are certainly not well adjusted to life in its broader social aspects. They suffer from many personality disorders. This is bound to be so since they are clearly not realizing a balanced blend of their egoistic and social needs. They do things to gain advantages for themselves but seldom experience the security that comes from social approval. One's feeling of social and personal worth comes from favorable recognition by others. Such recognition must be achieved by way of reasonably generous actions. The people whom we have been describing know little of these things.

and thus miss the experiences that give balance and poise to personality

We can readily see why crude pragmatists are not well adjusted. They are their own point of reference. They are forever concerned with the extent to which their own interests are being advanced. As a doctrine pragmatism tends to be individualistic. It induces man to be moral only in so far as he can see personal reasons for so doing. Social motives are seldom as clear as ego motives. Hence many, unable to see enough reasons for being socially minded, will not attempt to restrain their ego-centric impulses.

### *The Necessity of Common Standards*

That standards of moral value cannot be determined by isolated individual experience seems too clear to require mention. In an interdependent world no man can live unto himself. The common welfare of all within a group must be considered in setting up codes. Some standard or point of reference outside of the individual must determine the adequacy of behavior. Furthermore, if morality is to have more than a superficial meaning, the social as well as the personal consequences of each act must be taken into account. As the more conservative philosophers say, an act may be good even though it brings suffering in its train. Or to quote Tennyson, "because right is right to follow, right were wisdom in the scorn of consequences."

The determination of what is socially right or wrong involves racial experience and reasonable deduction. It cannot be left to the whims of individuals, especially those given to excessive self-concern. Decisions must take into account the time-proved needs of both individuals and social groups. Determinations must be made in the light of the testimony of racial development. If generations of mature experience have found value for the common good in monogamous marriage and honor in business relations, it becomes necessary for all of us to live accordingly. To do otherwise may be pleasing to the opportunist but in the broad social view it is nevertheless definitely maladjustive.

Arbitrary definition of what is right and what is wrong in conduct matters has traditionally been assumed by religious institutions. A number of religious standards, however, have been rejected by modern Americans. Many persons are left with noth-

ing more substantial to act upon than individual interpretations and personal impulses. They have no fixed point outside of themselves, supernatural or otherwise, to which they can tie up their social behavior. The result is the loss of an authoritative code and the consequent introduction of extreme individualism into social matters.

### *Why Pragmatism Does Not Work*

Pragmatism with its shifting individual standards of what is right (expedient) and what is wrong (fails to work), in its cruder forms, is individualistic and leads naturally to excessive self-concern. Self-concern is only a part of the personality picture of the well adjusted man or woman, it is always balanced by social concern—direct interest in the welfare of other personalities. The crude pragmatist has failed to balance his fundamental motives. He finds himself egoistically overbalanced.

A dangerous dog-eat-dog philosophy grows out of crude pragmatic doctrine. It weighs heavily against the chances of finding adjustment. Being largely devoid of standards for regulating his behavior, the liberalist in morals often turns to the use of his wits. Subscribing to no fixed standards of virtue, he naturally resorts to the use of his intelligence to get by. He devises schemes for forwarding his plans that are within the limits of technical law but that violate the spirit of fair play and justice. His associates have to watch him for fear he will put it over on them. Long experience has taught us that there is no possibility of finding adjustment in this way.

### *Some Effects of Pragmatism*

People who consciously accept pragmatism as a philosophy of life vary considerably in their motives and conduct. The same is true of those who adopt the pragmatic system without sensing what it is all about. Some stoop so low in behavior that the rest of us must be protected from them. Because of their relentless war against society certain individuals must be permanently confined in institutions. On the other hand there are scientists and scholars who, although they may be without scruples, live such secluded existences that their way of life constitutes no menace to society. Sometimes their discoveries benefit mankind enormously from a material point of view. Many of our luxuries are the

fruits of their labor. Certainly these luxuries were developed without forethought of their possible effects on individual and social integrity. Keen analysts have stated that our present moral disorder may be traceable to the softening effects of modern luxuries.

In addition to these extreme groups there are thousands of more moderate individuals of pragmatic bent who have never learned the importance of living by social values. Their logic we call the *intellect fallacy* since we have seen that an intellectual analysis of a situation does not necessarily suggest a plan of action which will yield the greatest good for the greatest number.

Crude pragmatists live rather meaningless lives. In Carrel's *Man the Unknown* the author portrays certain members of society as follows:

They are capable of the easy work which in modern society ensures the survival of the individual. They produce they consume they satisfy their psychological appetites. They also take pleasure in watching among great crowds athletic spectacles in seeing childish and vulgar moving pictures in being rapidly transported without effort or in looking at swiftly moving objects. They are soft sentimental lascivious and violent. They have no moral aesthetic or religious sense. They are extremely numerous. They engender a vast herd of children whose intelligence remains rudimentary."\*

Dr. Carrel goes on to say that from this colorless group society recruits a large share of its criminals, morons, and inmates of institutions for the mentally diseased. This sorry lot we call crudely pragmatic in outlook. Their actions reflect a philosophy based on individual expediency.

### III IS RELIGION MORE THAN MORALS AND ETHICS?

Many people hold definite religious views and some are quite emotional in their attitude toward the demands that religion makes on man. In looking at religion the psychologist must maintain an unbiased view of its controversies. He must think of religious problems in terms of their role in the development and rebuilding of human beings who are attempting to satisfy legitimate life needs in a balanced way. Here we shall examine

\* Alexis Carrel *Man the Unknown* Harper and Brothers 1935 p. 139



religious matters to discover their effectiveness as means to this end

### *Morals and Ethics vs Supernatural Religion*

To many of its adherents religion is an end in itself toward which the life plans of all men should be dedicated. Others who do not share this extreme view contend that men demand a higher authority for their actions than mere moral considerations. In short, these individuals believe that the great majority of men are so constituted that a moral life is not possible of achievement apart from religious influences. They hold certain truths to be of divine origin accepted through faith that rises above reason.

The moralist holds that by accepting definite social standards and discarding the doctrine of individual expediency in moral matters we established a satisfactory basis for sound living. The believer in supernatural religion replies that mere ethical and moral standards will break down under severe strain and stress. He contends that the only way to raise conduct above the plane of expediency is to vest it with a religious sanction.

Regardless of our stand in these matters, we can understand the view of the pioneer philosopher and psychologist, William James, who has suggested that in a world of frustrations

*Religion thus makes easy and felicitous what in any case is necessary, and if it be the only agency that can accomplish this result its vital importance as a human faculty stands vindicated beyond dispute. It becomes an essential organ of life performing a function which no other portion of our natures can so successfully fulfill.\**

### *Scientific Views of Religion*

As might be expected, many modern students of the science of man take a much different view of the nature of experience from that advanced by religionists. Theologians frequently remind science that it does not have a corner on knowledge relating to the nature of things in this universe, and that its methods can not explain the mysteries of religion. Science contends in reply that, although man has encountered what he calls religious ex-

\* William James *Varieties of Religious Experience* Longmans Green and Company 1902 p. 51

periences, these have no real existence outside of himself. The scientist frequently tells us that in his opinion all beneficial effects are the result of mere inner psychological processes inspired purely by belief. According to him, they are merely self-suggestion processes that are in no way dependent upon the existence of such external forces as angels, devils, a heaven, or a god.

This is the materialistic view. It is no doubt held by most scientists and others who have strong scientific inclinations.

In considering this group it should be said that they reason in harmony with one of science's most fundamental laws—the principle of *parsimony*. This principle holds that one must never offer a mystic or unnecessarily involved explanation for events that can be explained on a simpler, natural-causation basis. For example, science maintains that certain diseases are caused by germ invasions and not by the ill will of spirits. It insists that delinquent behavior is caused by personality disorders and not by temptations advanced by the devil. Science believes that it has largely dispelled mysticism, but the religious think otherwise. They accuse the scientists of over-simplifying matters.

### *Scientific Interpretations of Religious Beliefs*

Let us examine a few typical explanations of religious experience given by present-day workers in the psychological and psychiatric fields. Dr. V. E. Fisher, for example, holds that man has been led to invent the idea of a superman like deity because of his powerful desire to immortalize himself. Man has sought to perpetuate his ego, by thus inventing the existence of a personal god who would under certain circumstances rescue him from death. Although this is merely a psychological process, it has resulted, according to this psychologist, in much good to the race. Man came to realize that if he were to merit the good graces of the all-powerful deity, he must live a life of devotion to others. In this way religion has been a supreme balancer of the human egoistic and altruistic motives. Dr. Fisher believes that the partial destruction of religious belief by science and philosophy has done a great deal of harm to the personality adjustment of thousands of people. As he puts it, man has lost his most promising avenue to egoistic realization as well as his most powerful incentive to unselfish devotion to the race—both of

which religion provides—and has become the hapless victim of one of his most cherished possessions, the human intellect

Another explanation of man's belief in the supernatural doctrines of religion was suggested by the eminent psychiatrist, William A. White. According to Dr. White man has always thought so well of himself that he has developed a notion of the universe designed not only to inflate his own ego but to bolster his feeling of security as well. Thus man has been led to incorporate into his thinking the idea of a god whose special object of love and consideration he, as the flower of creation, would naturally be. This idea, together with the further flattery of himself that sun, moon, and stars were placed in the heavens for the particular purpose of contributing to his comfort and safety, gave man the much-sought after feeling of personal security. This mental process, going on entirely within the individual is said to account for man's adherence for so long a time to the comforts of religious belief.

These interpretations illustrate the point of view that our religious thinking is largely a process of comforting ourselves that it is an outgrowth of man's natural desire for security against the uncertainties of life and the dangers of the elements. It is maintained that the so-called instinct of primitive people to worship gods of wood and stone and objects of nature is based upon this natural effort to secure themselves against destruction. Primitive man could not cope with wild animals, disease, floods, famines, and other destructive elements in nature. What would be more natural for him than to invent the idea of spiritual beings who could do so and who might, if properly worshipped, intervene in his behalf? And as man developed a continuously higher form of civilized culture why should he not develop a progressively more refined notion of the nature of the deity? It was only when modern science stepped in that man is said to have become aware of the psychological nature of the whole process. At least this is what many scientists say.

### *Practical Values of Religious Belief*

From this discussion we can see that there is great difference of opinion regarding the true nature of religious experience. To the religious man complete belief in the existence and guiding care of a supernatural god is necessary to motivate moral be-

If one accepts the standards of living advocated by most religions he is less inclined to fashion his moral code for self centered action. He usually adopts a socially sound code. Furthermore, the individual thus grounded is not so likely to be turned from the path of duty by every wind of chance. Neither is his morality determined to such an extent by fear of consequences. Insofar as man can be taught to do so in a world such as ours the individual whose character rests on a foundation of intelligent religious belief will be inclined to follow the dictates of socially desirable principles. He will be dubious of codes of strictly intellectual origin. In other words, religious belief holds moral standards to be more important than pragmatic reason. Thus the religious endeavor to live in a way that is consistent with their beliefs.

### *Practical Religion and Personality Building*

Individuals without standards constitute a moral question mark in society. The more stable characteristics of those who have religious convictions form one of the reliable elements in our social structure.

We realize that we must not contrast the ideal Christian with the rogue. There are all kinds of individuals and all degrees of moral virtue in society. However, by and large the individual who is actually and seriously motivated by religious principles is likely to be a well-adjusted person. The fact that many so-called Christians do not live up to the Christian ideal is of course true but this does not destroy the personality values resident in the way of life laid down by functional religion.

It must not be assumed that religious circles alone can and always do produce our most desirable citizens. Such circles may have superior facilities for so doing but that is no guarantee that only they can succeed. As we have already mentioned the rearing of socially adjusted and emotionally balanced children and youth involves correct early methods of child training that can be followed by religious and secular parents alike. Each can bring about a degree of self-expression and self restraint in their children that is adequate to insure a satisfactory blend of egoistic and social motives. Certainly no one can succeed in such a delicate task by merely believing in religion. Definite things must be done to insure results. Religious people as well as

havior For him moral codes are insufficient guides There must be a divine sanction added to insure virtuous living To those of scientific belief religious experiences are purely personal psychological events which seem real to the individual because of wishful thinking The believer has been educated to favor supernatural realities He finds in religion what he wishes to find, a feeling of security amid uncertainties and comfort in time of need

In spite of their conclusion that religious beliefs are largely delusions, some scientists feel that it is a type of delusion which is extremely valuable for personality Just how egoistic and generous motives are to be satisfactorily blended without it is a disturbing question to many Others are of the belief that the development in childhood of desirable sets and moral habits will accomplish satisfactory results With considerable evidence at their disposal, they point out that religion has had its day and has not regenerated society Religion has not even been able to reform many of the individuals who have accepted its way of life Professor William C Bagley of Columbia University has even pointed out that in a number of instances the very areas in our country which afford the largest number of conservative churches and churchgoers have the higher crime ratios Dr Bagley's figures were not intended to discount churches and religion They merely show the fallacy of assuming that the presence of conservative religious influences guarantees superior moral living The conclusion of many individuals is, then, that religious beliefs are not absolutely essential to consistent moral behavior

### *Religion in the Adjustment of People*

The import of all this for personality balance is of considerable consequence to the psychologist who deals with the problems of nervous and unhappy people All these have positive, negative or indifferent attitudes toward religious matters The psychologist must take notice of the varying views and deal with each client in terms of what he believes not what we might think he ought to believe There is no merit in attempting to use religion as a form of treatment for those who are too indifferent concerning it to believe and appreciate its adjustment values. Neither is there any point in discounting religion to those who find comfort in its beliefs The individual's welfare comes first and religious

matters must be handled in terms of their contribution to his social adjustment. In psychological work we are not concerned with the merits of religious belief as such. We are human engineers who capitalize on religious influences in the same way that we use any other influence that can be directed toward human welfare.

#### IV. WHAT MAY "FUNCTIONAL" RELIGION DO FOR PERSONALITY?

In order to make clear certain points concerning the value of religious influences for personality development, we like to make a distinction between two different aspects of religion. This analysis may do violence to the theologian's ideas but will serve the purpose that we have in mind. We have reference to the side of religion that may be regarded as being *practical* or *functional* in that it stands for a satisfactory way of living and dealing with people, and to the aspect of religion which, because of its emphasis on beliefs, ceremonies, and rituals might properly be thought of as being *formal* or *institutional*. This distinction has a great deal of import for personality development. Although there is clearly a direct relationship between these two aspects, their relative merits for personality balance can be determined to a surprising degree. We shall concern ourselves with the social values of *functional* religion.

##### *The Practical Side of Religion*

The practical side of religion has always emphasized definite codes for dealing with ourselves and with our associates. It has provided man with moral rules that enable him to distinguish between right and wrong. Although somewhat inflexible, these rules, properly understood and intelligently applied, answer man's need for a degree of certainty in his action. They offer an antidote for standardless living. When a child accepts the idea that divine authority approves certain actions, such as obedience, honesty, sympathy, gratitude, reverence, tolerance, and self-control, and believes that certain other forms of behavior such as cheating, lying, stealing, cursing, and disobeying are definitely wrong, his developing philosophy of life is likely to take on a certainty which is foreign to the pragmatist. This is assuming, of course, that all other aspects of his rearing are being carried on in a reasonably intelligent way.

If one accepts the standards of living advocated by most religions he is less inclined to fashion his moral code for self-centered action. He usually adopts a socially sound code. Furthermore, the individual thus grounded is not so likely to be turned from the path of duty by every wind of chance. Neither is his morality determined to such an extent by fear of consequences. Insofar as man can be taught to do so in a world such as ours, the individual whose character rests on a foundation of intelligent religious belief will be inclined to follow the dictates of socially desirable principles. He will be dubious of codes of strictly intellectual origin. In other words, religious belief holds moral standards to be more important than pragmatic reason. Thus the religious endeavor to live in a way that is consistent with their beliefs.

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It must not be assumed that religious circles alone can and always do produce our most desirable citizens. Such circles may have superior facilities for so doing but that is no guarantee that only they can succeed. As we have already mentioned, the rearing of socially adjusted and emotionally balanced children and youth involves correct early methods of child training that can be followed by religious and secular parents alike. Each can bring about a degree of self-expression and self-restraint in their children that is adequate to insure a satisfactory blend of egoistic and social motives. Certainly no one can succeed in such a delicate task by merely believing in religion. Definite things must be done to insure results. Religious people as well as

others must follow the rules of the game, rules which involve definite cause and effect relationships. But, other things being equal, the religious home which orders its program in harmony with definite moral and religious standards, is in a somewhat better position to secure character and personality development in its children.

### *Devotion to Causes and Personality Development*

Another advantage possessed by functional religion is its emphasis upon the value of devotion to a great cause. It is a well known psychological principle that the greatest happiness comes to those who throw themselves wholeheartedly into some worthy activity. Sincere devotion to great ends that have as their objective the relief of human suffering enables men to lose themselves in what is called the greater life of universal brotherhood. This loss of self-concern in the broader field of service for mankind is known by every psychologist to be one of the avenues to adjustment. Many of the author's clients are definite testimony to this fact. In this sense, then, religious devotion, intelligently practised, provides a stability to personality that is not easy to find elsewhere.

The eminent British author, Viscount Bryce, has even questioned whether a nation devoid of religious principles could continue to exist. According to him we cannot be sure on this point because no nation has reached a high degree of civilization without religious influence. A quotation will illustrate his misgivings.

'Standing in the midst of a great American city, and watching the throngs of eager figures streaming hither and thither marking the sharp contrasts of poverty and wealth, an increasing mass of wretchedness and an increasing display of luxury, knowing that before long a hundred millions of men will be living between ocean and ocean under this one government—a government which their own hands have made, and which they feel to be the work of their own hands—one is startled by the thought of what might befall this huge but delicate fabric of laws and commerce and social institutions were the foundations it has rested on to crumble away. Would the moral code stand unshaken, and with it the reverence for law, the sense of duty toward the community, and even toward the generations to come? \*

\* James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth* The Macmillan Company, 1901 Vol II p 598



Present-day psychology points out the fundamental importance of many principles advocated by religion as aids to the mental health of man. Religion, many believe, overemphasizes the formal and institutional. Nevertheless, it has been in possession all these centuries of a key to moral stability and mental health. Respect for a Supreme Being, with its incentive to enlist in service for mankind, assists in providing that balance of egoistic and social motives that makes for sound, socialized personality.

Even in the case of persons who were reared in an atmosphere of religious devotion but who later came to discard belief in its doctrines the effects of early teachings are often present. This is ordinarily true unless other experiences entered to counteract the influence exerted by religious training.

#### V HOW MAY WE MAINTAIN PERSONALITY INTEGRATION?

The concept of integration is defined by Dr. L. F. Shaffer as 'a state of an individual in which his various habits, perceptions, motives, and emotions are fully coordinated, resulting in effective adjustment'. \*

The necessity for organizing all life experiences into a unified whole is indicated by the plight of individuals who go to pieces in a crisis or who are not consistent in their patterns of conduct.

In normal growth and development there is a gradual tendency for the individual to bring conflicting personality trends into harmony. When we say that a person acts like a grown up, we indicate approval of the extent to which he has been able to integrate various aspects of behavior in a way that makes for effective social adjustment.

Integration implies that clarity of knowledge and that objectivity regarding one's own and others' behavior already discussed as *emotional maturity*. The abandonment of unnecessary psychological drugs and the attempt to order conduct along the lines mentioned in our chapter on 'Carving Out a Personality,' represent important steps in the maintenance of personality. The present chapter suggests an additional step, that of organizing one's thinking around a guiding philosophy of life.

\* L. F. Shaffer, *The Psychology of Adjustment*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936, p. 382.

*The Role of Religion in Integration*

We have endeavored to discard individual pragmatism as a factor in the maintenance and integration of personality. We cannot however, treat religion in this fashion. As Walter Lippmann has said

Serenity of soul requires some better organization of life than a man can attain by pursuing his casual ambitions satisfying his hungers and for the rest accepting destiny as an idiot's tale in which one dumb sensation succeeds another to no known end. And it is not possible for him to be wholly alive. For that depends upon his sense of being completely engaged with the world with all his passions and all the faculties in rich harmonies with one another and in deep rhythm with the nature of things.

These are the gifts of a vital religion which can bring the whole of a man into adjustment with the whole of his relevant experience. \*

The psychologist can commend religion as a sound factor in personality balance in the case of those who are neither too fanatical about its practices nor too cynical about its mysteries. Some of the advantages of religious belief may be stated as follows: (1) It encourages the development of those social skills that mean so much for winning the approval of others. (2) It recommends a humility which in turn may tend to keep the ego within bounds. (3) It provides an avenue for the realization of a balanced blend between the self and selfless motives. (4) It encourages self-indulgent individuals to perform as duties those homely tasks which they do not naturally want to do. (5) It provides opportunities for service in a compelling cause. (6) It is an antidote for crude pragmatism. (7) It offers a life plan resting on the comforting factors of faith and hope. (8) Finally it offers a form of security that may go far toward guarding the individual against the various forms of psychological disorders to which the human personality is heir.

The principles of personality integrity inherent in functional religion are fundamental to the maintenance of civilization. This does not mean that social security cannot be realized without adherence to religious belief. What it does mean is that those who

\* Walter Lippmann *A Preface to Morals* The Macmillan Company 1929  
p. 8

subscribe to the way of life advocated by religion are in a favorable position to develop balanced personalities

### *Philosophy as a Plan of Life*

If one's intellect rejects the supernatural declarations of religion, he must still organize behavior around stable values in order to build an adjusted personality. The individual who is unwilling to accept pragmatism as a code and who is unable to accept religious interpretations of life may still adopt a satisfactory philosophy of living. Any philosophy which correctly interprets the experience and progress of the race will be of great value in the maintenance of personality integration. Many individuals are satisfied with the real good which they believe they find in their philosophy. Any suggestion that only the religion of our forefathers brings desirable adjustment would ignore the many balanced individuals who have followed other philosophies or religions. An earnest desire to contribute to the improvement and welfare of society may constitute a consistent directive force equal to that of religious belief.

Some who do not accept the supernatural element in religion still find the Christian code of ethics a satisfactory philosophy or way of life. Such individuals are usually characterized by a strong sense of duty and responsibility.

The discrepancy between religious beliefs and scientific or philosophic views encountered in high school and college often causes a student to experience emotional conflict. Those who are thus suspended in doubt would be wise to remember that although science has offered us much authoritative information it does not pretend to have completely unraveled the mysteries of the universe. Even the most intellectual individual is justified in accepting philosophic or religious tradition as a satisfactory explanation for matters beyond the present realm of science.

A recent trend is the acceptance of some political ideology as a plan around which to organize life. This point of view implies an absorption in the task of building human and social values into our scheme of political existence. One criticism of the acceptance of a political philosophy however is the ruthlessness with which certain ideologies pragmatically applied actually destroy human values! A change in our social order through growth and improvement is a desirable part of our goal in life but the

plan for change embodied in some political schemes promotes a disregard for others not conducive to the integration of personality

Any philosophy designed to accomplish life's fundamental aims must center around values acceptable to society and desirable to the individual, and around ideals of conduct which embody the cumulative experience or wisdom of the race. The acceptance of such a philosophy of life will do much to develop and maintain a satisfactorily integrated personality

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## X. PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIETY

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We have surveyed the many and varied factors involved in the development of wholesome, socialized personalities. Will society profit by our present knowledge of these factors? What will success or failure mean to the race? There are forces at work that are clearly detrimental to social solidarity, but there are others that promise to aid racial progress.

We must find practical ways to use our knowledge of methods and means for improving individual members of society. Our effort should be devoted to the end that we avoid widespread neuroticism and create a better social order. Our quest for such an outcome will take us over the following ground:

- I. Looking Toward the Future—What Do We See?
  - II. What Developments Are Detrimental to Social Welfare?
  - III. What Psychological Proposals May Help Stabilize Society?
  - IV. What Is Mankind's Capacity for Improvement?
  - V. Is There a Psychological Foundation for Social Planning?
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## X PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIETY

### I LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE — WHAT DO WE SEE?

#### *Pessimistic View of the Future*

The view that a given person holds toward the probable future of society depends upon the attitude he takes toward and the interpretation that he places upon conditions around him. The man or woman who has been reared in an atmosphere in which the evil aspects of living are emphasized, comes rather naturally to think in terms of impending calamities. Such an individual is likely to be concerned about such trends as the breakdown of the home, the decline of religious fervor, and the widespread indulgence in material luxuries. He is also greatly alarmed over the increase in neurosis and insanity, the widespread organization of graft and crime, and the commercialization of amusements. He worries about the apparent increase in selfish behavior, the glorification of war, widespread economic insecurity, the urbanization of the population, and the unwillingness of society to protect its children through either vigorous eugenic or environmental measures.

Continued absorption in portents of doom leads well meaning people to feel that the world is going to the dogs in no uncertain fashion. We do not say that these people are necessarily wrong in their interpretations. Judgment on that point is not our concern here. We merely desire to point out that the same world and the same general sequence of historical events which have led optimistic people to entertain a bright outlook for the future, have caused the group just mentioned to adopt an alarmist attitude. We begin to appreciate the *psychology of attitude*. One group sees destruction ahead while the other sees hope for a finer world. Everything depends upon the types of educative influences to which an individual has been subjected in the course of his personality development.

Nevertheless, many believe that they have reached their conclusions on purely intellectual grounds. Actually they have

been influenced by tendencies to read certain cherished interpretations into their experiences.

### *Optimistic View of the Future*

An optimistic group feels that with proper effort a very satisfactory world can be wrought by the hand of man. This view is in harmony with their tendency to select for emphasis and nurture the more promising aspects of social progress. These people point to the fact that whereas there have always been crises and destructive influences to contend with, the race has surmounted one of these difficulties after another. They believe that we are emerging into a reasonably civilized world in which abound many opportunities, much freedom, considerable enlightenment, and a goodly amount of social and economic security. They remind us that we now treat insane people with kindness and justice *instead of chaining or beating them*. They mention also that we have well-equipped hospitals where unfortunates who formerly languished and died may now receive skilled and sympathetic medical treatment. They point to the many educational institutions everywhere in which the children of the economically less favored, as well as those of the more privileged, may receive an education that will enable them better to adjust to the practical requirements of a changing world. This group reminds us that we have innumerable adult and child welfare institutions throughout the land where the gospel of goodwill and physical healing is dispensed without stint and without price. They also point out that in our great democracy, at least, laws of universal justice have been drawn up to safeguard the civil rights of even the most lowly citizen.

These and many other signs of steady social progress are pointed out by the optimist to prove his contention that the world is gradually becoming more civilized. To him the future is hopeful because social unrest, political intrigue, and occasional wars notwithstanding, the forces of progress created by man's superior intellect and adaptability are marching steadily on. He reminds us, reasonably, that many dire predictions associated with such changes as amendments to the constitution, extending freedom to women, *easing up on religious taboos*, and substituting intelligent guidance for harsh discipline have failed to materialize.

*The Apparent Increase of Neurotic Trends*

The implications of the apparent rapid increase in so-called mental diseases as interpreted by these directly opposed groups are especially important. The same may be said of the contrasted interpretations which they place upon the causes of these disorders. It is known that mental diseases as extreme psychological disorders are called are more numerous than all diseases of the physical variety combined. State institutions for the care of such defectives are full but must accommodate approximately seventy thousand more each year. There are a great many more cared for in private homes and sanitariums. A survey in New York State indicated that in that commonwealth one out of every twenty two persons had to be placed in a hospital for mental cases at some time in his or her life. These figures are largely for individuals suffering from pronounced mental diseases (in sanity or psychosis). When we come to estimate numbers in the field of the less serious and more curable neuroses (emotional instability) with which we have been more concerned in this volume the relative number of victims is even greater.

The worst feature of all is that little is known of the nature and correction of most of the types of insanity. Science and medicine have been able to do little more than classify and segregate. There is some doubt whether these diseases have their bases in brain lesions, germ invasions, glandular disturbances and blood chemistry, or whether they are straight psychological disorders growing out of deep-seated personal conflicts. To date no one knows the truth of the matter. We know a great deal more about the nature and causation of neuroses and some promising methods have been developed for their correction. Yet unless we can do something definite to prevent their increase the neuroses represent a serious menace to our national future.

*Conflicting Views on Social Stability*

The more pessimistic leaders are inclined to feel that at the rate the combined psychological disorders are increasing society is sure to find itself in serious difficulty in the near future. The pessimists are further inclined to blame this unhappy state in part at least on the intense artificial tempo of life which modern technology has forced upon us all.



The more optimistic suggest that we have always been plagued by much the same percentage of psychological ills that obtains today. They reason that we only seem to have experienced an increase in insanity and neurotic disorders. Our modern methods of detecting abnormal people, our increased facilities for handling those who apply for help, our present-day interest in gathering statistics, and our general sensitiveness to mental hygiene problems have merely made it appear so say the optimists that psychological disorders are on the increase. Our neurotics are said to be merely the former queer and unsociable people. The psychotics or insane are said to represent the twentieth-century edition of the one-time lunatics, witches and individuals possessed of the devil.

### *The Probable Real Causes of Nervous Disorders*

It is frequently said that the modernization and urbanization of life has resulted in a rate of living that causes both physical and psychological tension. According to the findings of psychologists the real causes of nervous disorders are internal conflicts, thwarting of life needs, and failure to achieve egoistic-social balance. There are, of course, physical backgrounds for many disturbances of personality. For the most part, however, such evidence as we have seems to indicate that introversion, emotional instability, and outright neurosis are the natural result of a failure to develop attitudes and skills that give expression to the social motive and a failure to realize legitimate self-recognition.

It is probably a mistake to blame the present widespread nervousness on the physical stresses of modern life. It would no doubt be nearer the truth to say that people are maladjusted because they lack an understanding of human nature or have failed to act in accordance with those principles which they do understand. This interpretation leaves the way open for improvement. With more adequate education, increased economic security and better techniques of child rearing, we can teach the next generation to maintain a better adjustment in the midst of the hustle and bustle of a rapidly moving world. *Balanced personalities are functioning well now and there is no reason why others cannot be taught to do the same.*

## *The Psychology of Attitude*

We see that what one looks for in the future is rather definitely determined by his attitude toward and his interpretation of significant events both past and present. There is no such thing as a strictly impartial standard by means of which we can look to the future. Personal attitudes are relative. Each individual sees what he wants to see or has been taught to see. No one can pull himself up by the boot straps out of his early attitudes and indoctrinations in the social, moral, and religious fields. The more broadly a man views life and the deeper his insight into the meanings of experience, the more reliable will be his predictions of probable future trends. The more hopeful his attitude toward the improbability of the race, the more diligently will a man extend himself to make a real contribution to its improvement. Man is improvable and there is much evidence for believing that, if properly disposed through correct education, he can and will continue to construct a better world.

### II WHAT DEVELOPMENTS ARE DETRIMENTAL TO SOCIAL WELFARE? \*

If the logic of our discussion regarding the nature of attitudes is sound, we see that many predictions of future calamities are based on groundless pessimism. Yet optimists must admit, if they are honest with themselves, that there are tendencies in evidence all about them that may, if unchecked, lead to definite social decline. This is not to say that the forces which we have in mind are inevitable or that they cannot be controlled. As things now stand, some of them are carrying us farther away from social solidarity. Under properly motivated conditions it seems entirely possible that most or all of them can be checked or at least redirected.

We have reference to the following six related trends of the day: (1) the individualistic attitude of the family, (2) the decline of belief in supernatural religion, (3) the failure to rear children according to sound psychological principles, (4) the eva-

\* Cf. V. E. Fisher, *Auto-Correctivism: The Psychology of Nervousness*. The Caxton Printers, 1937, Chap. 20.

sion of racial obligations, (5) the emancipation from moral restraints, and (6) man's constant tendency to pamper himself

### *The Individualistic Attitude of the Family*

If we are to achieve social harmony each of us must submerge some of our self interest in favor of the needs of the group. We must adopt a broad view of society in which we think of each individual as achieving satisfactory self-expression in harmony with the rights and feelings of society as a whole. Furthermore, each member's activity in the group should be self-directed and ethically sound. His actions should always be made to pass the acid test, not only of their usefulness for his personal needs, but of their fitness for forwarding the common interests of society.

Too frequently the family acts as though it were a separate unit intended to exist more or less apart from the larger society. This is what we mean when we say that the family is individualistic in outlook. It splits the child's development by demanding unselfishness in the home while at the same time encouraging a sort of rugged individualism in outside contacts. The child is frequently taught conflicting views of dealing with those about him, one to be carried out in the home and the other to be utilized in the world of people external to his family. He is expected to be affectionate, friendly, and thoughtful in connection with members of his family, he is taught to be obedient and respectful to his father and mother and to be fair and generous to his brothers and sisters. Outside the home, however, many a child is encouraged by his parents to sacrifice friendships and social interest in favor of a program of self-enhancement.

This situation can mean only detriment to the child's personality development. Whereas he should achieve a balance between personal recognition and respect for those about him in both the home and society at large, the child comes to be too submissive in the home and too individualistic or indifferent toward others outside. The result is a failure to adjust adequately to either group. We have thus a partial explanation at least for the every man for himself philosophy of life so common in our society. This attitude, along with excessive family attachments, can only mean trouble for society.

### *The Decline in Belief in Supernatural Religion*

Although belief in the existence of a personal god has by no means always controlled people for the better it cannot be denied that the feeling of responsibility to a divine being has been a powerful force in the conduct of men and women. Man has as a rule been more readily influenced by demands coming from a supernatural authority than by human decrees. Perhaps most important of all socialized living has been powerfully stimulated by the belief that the promise of immortality could only be realized through a sincere program of unselfish devotion.

With the coming of widespread doubt of the existence of a personal deity, man has lost one of his greatest incentives to moral behavior. He finds it easier to throw off the yoke of restraint. However, in the opinion of some who are qualified to speak, man's loss of feeling that he is the flower of creation and the special object of God's favor need not lead to an abandonment of the controls of behavior. With the realization that our belief in the supernatural may be but a psychological process for attaining a feeling of security, there may come a deeper insight into more definite and scientific ways of adjusting ourselves to the laws of the universe. Science may reenthrone man. Nevertheless so far as the masses of relatively untrained people are concerned the psychologist sees a great loss in moral motivation with the passing of religious fervor.

### *The Evasion of Social and Racial Obligations*

Here again we have a threat to future social stability. Man in his efforts to find time and energy to pursue his personal interests has discovered many ways of performing racial activities without in any serious sense discommoding himself. His selfless efforts are merely substitutes for the real thing; they are not primarily generous and only incidentally serve social and racial needs.

Examples of such evasion are not hard to find in the social scene of today. Many a fertile woman who could contribute to society and the race by begetting children and properly caring for them attaches her maternal interests instead to a pet animal. By so doing she gives a certain amount of her energy and devotion to some object other than herself but she fails to promote

worthy human social ends. In the end she is the loser, she fails to achieve the personality balance that can come only through genuine service to the race.

It is the same with the busy business man who finds it very convenient and satisfying to write an occasional check in favor of charitable institutions which while making no demands on his time or private plans will do something definite for the underprivileged. This is a comfortable way of satisfying the need for making a contribution to the nurture of the race. Yet insofar as it represents an evasion of the true social activities to which we are all obligated this form of generosity misses the mark. It is essentially an escape process. In the end it constitutes a threat to the integrity of the individual indulging in it and to the future of the race.

### *The Failure to Rear Children Psychologically*

As things now stand thousands of children are reared in fantastic ways without interference on the part of a state which claims to be interested primarily in the public welfare. Even in the so-called better families one can observe the violation of simple fundamental principles of child care and development. Either excessive thwarting of the child's legitimate desire for personal respect or overindulgence of his every whim is the order of the day in many homes. Both of these extremes constitute defective discipline. Furthermore conditions conducive to the development of delinquent, perverted and outright neurotic living are allowed to flourish under our very eyes. A nation that is well protected by child labor and pure food laws is strangely indifferent to the bizarre antics of parents who should certainly be required to know better.

This unfortunate situation is due in part to a lack of simple psychological knowledge and to some extent to the egoistic tendency of parents to consider their offspring their own private property. We are but the temporary custodians of our children. There is nothing save excessive ego that warrants taking unrestricted charge of the personality development of future members of society. We have no right to take liberties with the oncoming generation just because we happen to be parents. An intelligent society should if it hopes to build for the future utilize

every bit of scientific knowledge at its command to safeguard the personality growth of future generations. The difficulty is that interference with the sanctity of the home appears to violate the ideal of personal freedom as guaranteed by a democratic form of government. Yet something will have to be done to insure the fitness of parents for child rearing. Nothing could be more important than the planning of the personality development of our children and youth.

We can improve society immeasurably by building better character qualities and social skills into the lives of children. By observing proper psychological principles in insuring a balanced realization of their life motives we can assist our children in carving out the kind of generous and self-sufficient traits that make for successful adjustment to the many personal and social requirements of life. This outcome we can secure by extending to them security and approval and the advantages of wholesome living conditions. We can also do them the favor of restraining them firmly but courteously when their egoistic interests manifest themselves too strongly. We can also assist our young people greatly by giving them an opportunity to realize personal independence and self-reliance as rapidly as possible.

### *The Emancipation from Moral Restraints*

With the increasing secularization of thought and removal of religious restraints, a great many people, both old and young, are much inclined to deny that there are any moral issues. These individuals are more or less indifferent in matters pertaining to honesty, fidelity to promises, recognition of others' rights, marital faithfulness, sexual chastity, and other basic racial values. To a great many persons the so-called intellectual release from religious restraints has opened the door to complete disregard for all forms of moral restriction. Having freed themselves from the beliefs of unscientific thinkers, as they would probably call them, these individuals reason away every obstacle to free and unhampered expression of their natural desires. This is the logical road to crude pragmatism. It certainly does not bode well for the future of society. It is the old story of ignoring moral standards in favor of a more unhampered license. This is the heart of the moral crisis that has overtaken modern civilization.

There is every reason for believing that controls are important for man's stability in all generations. This is true whether these controls are cloaked with religious sanctions or whether they are regarded as group welfare doctrines (mores). They are, actually, racial achievements in adjustment and as such are indispensable as a code for the guidance of man's conduct. No amount of decline of belief in a day of judgment need destroy respect for the fundamentals of social solidarity. To say that moral irresponsibility must, in the nature of the case, follow upon secularization of thought is to claim a cause and effect relationship that has not been demonstrated. It is true that religious fervor often acts as a check on immoral action and that it may stabilize moral conduct. Yet many non religious people can and do follow a program of moral behavior that is entirely in harmony with the virtues which society prizes.

It is our contention that modern man has come to confuse real welfare principles with those that might properly be regarded as unimportant in nature. The confusion seems to have begun, so far as our country is concerned, in the days of New England Calvinism. It has increased with the passing of the years until at present it represents the crux of our national character problem. In Puritan days our forefathers enveloped their ardent religious beliefs with a collection of taboos which forbade practically every form of pleasure and play. As their children and grandchildren became more secular in thought and commercial in outlook, they gradually began to abandon the more rigid religious doctrines. This was particularly true of those accessory doctrines concerned with pleasures, comforts, passing styles, and similar less essential matters.

However, as unnecessary restrictions were abandoned there arose a confusion as to just which social and religious standards were or were not basic for group welfare. The net result of this confusion was that fundamental moral and social controls began to fall along with the less essential accessory taboos and restrictions (folkways). Today a great many people have no clear conception of the difference between indispensable moral standards and passing caprices. Thus we are said to be in an age of collapse of conscience which knows few absolute standards and which rejoices in its intellectual emancipation. The result has proved a liability so far as social welfare is concerned.

*Man's Constant Tendency to Pamper Himself*

We need not dwell at any length on this destructive tendency. It has constituted the theme of much of our volume. It includes the widespread practice of evading social and racial obligations in favor of self-enhancement. It also involves the tendency to do what one wants to do, with a habit of excusing the same on "rational" grounds. Self-interest includes as well a decided tendency to substitute psychological evasions for the actual solution of ever-recurring problems. A decided tendency to be concerned about personal comfort and ease is also one of its results. The self-pampering process leads naturally to a steady retreat into the false stronghold of introversion. Furthermore, as we have already seen, excessive self-interest is one of the forerunners of neurosis. When an individual's life energy is turned in upon himself there results a natural building up of tensions that can lead to nothing but the various symptoms of nervousness.

Withdrawal from the obligations of life leads to increased loss of social efficiency until the victim, largely devoid of friends, is practically forced to supply his own ego recognition. He goes the way of social solitude, the road to personal and social maladjustment. Excessive self-concern is one of the most serious forms of racial degeneracy. Its logical end is very disturbing indeed to the stability of our society. It is also one of the most difficult tendencies in human nature for psychology or any other profession to alter.

These and similar trends in our midst must be considered by students of social progress. Although all of these trends are controllable, there is little likelihood of an early conversion of the masses of people to a serious realization of their importance. In the meantime we must do everything in our power to turn the tide of development toward the stronger and more social qualities that must be characteristic of a nation that hopes to avoid the handicaps of a too individualistic social order.

### III. WHAT PSYCHOLOGICAL PROPOSALS MAY HELP STABILIZE SOCIETY?

Psychology is no magic wand which can wave away the ills of society. It is not a cure-all for anything and should not be con-



verted into a fetish. Yet psychology has some things to offer man and his society. Its suggestions simple though they may seem touch the very heart of human adjustment. Psychology's message is that people should learn to live more actively and socially that they should acquire the skills which make for acceptance by others and that they endeavor to make constant contributions no matter how small to the construction causes for which an orderly and enlightened society is always striving.

### *Psychology's Message to Society*

Psychologists know full well that they cannot hope to undo in its entirety what the years have wrought in mature men and women. Thus they naturally focus their attention for the most part on the children and youth. This is not to say that mature persons cannot if sufficiently interested develop more desirable personalities by the processes described in this book. Many adults most certainly can. Important as that is it is the method of cure and not of prevention. Cure is essential and should be utilized for all it is worth but from the standpoint of bringing about a more harmonious and enduring future society, prevention is fundamental.

Psychology proposes that society stabilize itself by promoting everywhere the intelligent rearing of its oncoming generation. We are advocating a widespread and studied plan of action which can be counted upon to strengthen our social structure. Good results should be obtainable especially among the more intelligent citizens. It would not be the temper of America to advocate the political objectives for which some of the nations of Europe are striving. We might well admire and attempt to emulate the enthusiasm and united action which some of them are displaying in their efforts to reach their particular goals. No nation can build character and personality into its children on a program of indifference. There must be widespread interest and concern for such an objective. In the child rearing realm this concern is to a discouraging degree lacking. In many cases we are training only for efficient crime careers and for outright neuroticism.

### *Intelligent Democracy and Child Rearing*

One psychologist has advocated that we now devote our scientific knowledge to the serious business of promoting social better

ability, and whose duty it would be to establish a chain of state-supervised Child Guidance Clinics or Family Problem Schools. These centers would be presided over by trained psychologists and would be free to prospective and actual parents. Both, it is believed, should be expected to avail themselves of such service.

Parents who voluntarily sought the services of one of the clinics would be protected. If the parents cooperated with the clinic before and after the birth of the child and yet the latter turned out to be delinquent or neurotic, the state would step in and care for it in a state school maintained for the purpose. Under these circumstances the child's care would be given without cost to the parents. If, on the other hand, certain parents refused to work with a clinic from the time of the birth of the child, they would be required to pay for its support in the state school in the event that the child had to be removed from the home. According to its advocate this plan would greatly reduce the indifference now displayed by so many parents. It might create a genuine interest in child training.

### *National Interest in Child Psychology*

It is our belief that everything possible should be done to encourage both educators and laymen to take a keen and persistent interest in the psychology of child care. We would like to visualize a great chain of adult study groups throughout the land concerning themselves earnestly with the problems of personality building in children. There should also be many more practical courses and child clinics in our colleges and universities. These courses should be presided over by dynamic teachers who from both personal experience and rich preparation would be in a position to drive home the practical principles of child growth and development. We also suggest personality building activities and courses in the high school. Secondary pupils and college students should be concerned with their own development as well as that of their future children. Although remote problems do not greatly interest young learners, all are concerned about personal adjustment.

### *Personality Improvement a Universal Concern*

The common subject matter for all these courses of study is human nature. The quest would be for ways and means of

utilizing knowledge for the continuous improvement of individual and collective lives. All concerned would study and endeavor to practise definite social skills. Life goals would be discussed and causes, in the service of which the lives of young and old alike could find point and meaning, would be developed. Youth would be assisted in developing a philosophy of life that would serve to resist the inroads of crude moral codes. All would be encouraged to adopt intelligent and consistent attitudes. These classes would consider the problem of avoiding excessive psychological drugging in favor of a wholesome tendency to face with courage the realities of life. Lastly, the group study would emphasize the importance of controlling children's environments in such a way that they are reasonably sure to realize their basic needs for recognition and service. The fact that parents embrace some variety of religious belief should not exempt them from this study. They must provide conditions for the realization of egoistic motives and for the development of social skills just the same as others. Intelligent religious training will be very helpful but is no substitute for correct psychological procedures. Correct psychological methods can, of course, be employed in a religious education program.

### *Ways to the Stabilization of Marriage*

The training program described is certainly designed to better the race through stabilization of the marriage relation. It is our contention that preparation for marriage is made in childhood in the sense that the personality qualities required for harmonious married life are built into the child at that time. This point is well brought out in the previously mentioned researches of Dr. Lewis M. Terman and associates of Stanford University. While no one, including Dr. Terman himself, claims to know all of the personality combinations most desirable in the marriage relation, results of the studies made do indicate what kind of personality qualities are generally found among happily married men and women.

Leaving out of account for our purposes such questions as early versus late marriage and difference between ages of the contracting parties, Dr. Terman's researches show that successful marriage is to a large extent dependent upon extrovertive and emotionally stable characteristics. From personality tests given

to groups of happily married, unhappily married, and divorced couples, the investigators found that the divorced and unhappily married were more introverted, unstable, and generally self centered than the happily married. The latter like all good personalities, were inclined to be interested in 'social service, uplift interests, and 'causes generally'. They were actively interested in people, in community enterprises, in group gatherings, and in the welfare of their neighbors. In short, the happily married couples tended to be extroverted, well-adjusted, and self directive.

This means that the personal qualities that are necessary to happy individual and social adjustments are the very ones that make for satisfactory married life. The married relation is intimate and thus requires well developed altruistic attitudes. Hence because the institution of marriage is a stabilizing social factor personality building becomes a racial contribution when it develops in young people the disposition to be the right kind of marriage partner.

### *Can Mass Movements Reform Society?*

Although psychologists are greatly interested in group movements such as religious conversions, social reforms, economic equalization and group acceptance of social standards none of these is deemed adequate to solve the problem of thorough social improvement. All of these movements are valuable and have done much good usually because they have had the right material with which to work. Of themselves such collective movements can do little with individuals who have not been prepared by fundamentally sound childhood training to respond to their ideals.

This is a point that is often overlooked. Usually the man who forsakes a life of depravity for one of honor and integrity has undergone a personal conflict in which early belief in certain standards of living played a prominent role.

Psychologists do not as a rule believe that mass movements can take the place of intelligent and substantial individual education directed toward a socialized view of society. Historically such movements have not succeeded in the regulation of individual behavior to any great extent. Mass movements bring together great numbers of adherents to social causes, cults and religious

sects, but they seldom build, for individual members, the ideal type of character unless early training has also contributed to that end. Thus some of us choose to cast our lot with a program of developing virile, individually adjusted, and socialized personalities. In this program mass movements will have a part but not the major role. That role is reserved for smaller units of society — parents, teachers, playmates, relatives, and other members of the community. These, especially the parents influence the child's original attitudes toward life. The larger society determines the general behavior forms that these attitudes will take.

#### IV WHAT IS MANKIND'S CAPACITY FOR IMPROVEMENT?

Educators have always wondered about man's possibilities of improvement along both mental and personality lines. Numerous investigators have tried to discover whether intelligence and character are biologically inherited or whether the status of these factors in any given pupil is not largely the result of the kinds of experiences and opportunities encountered in early life. Much of the accumulated evidence indicates that due to our ignorance of the effects of favorable opportunity upon intellectual and personality status, the influence of inheritance has been greatly overestimated. We have a great deal of information strongly suggestive that practically all character and personality traits are learned.

##### *The Influence of Opportunity on Mental Status*

Present evidence shows that the mental status of an individual as indicated by his I Q (Intelligence Quotient) changes noticeably when environmental conditions are markedly changed over a period of several years. The I Q is apparently not a fixed inherited intellectual quality. Although tests constructed to measure intelligence are carefully prepared to avoid measuring achievement, the learning factor cannot be entirely ignored. The intelligence quotient is in fact an index of what a person has been able to learn about the items included in the test administered. Had his educational opportunities been markedly different any individual's test intelligence might also have been different. The many studies of identical (similar) twins reared apart

of children placed in foster homes for a period of years, and of country versus city children show this fact rather clearly.

Many mentally subnormal children do not seem to profit by even the best of educational opportunities. These children are definitely defective from causes that are not fully known. Their affliction does not alter the fact that the mental status of the great majority of normal and near normal children changes somewhat with the conditions under which they are reared. There are also what we commonly call the gifted children, the intellectually brilliant youngsters who in many cases seem to master the most difficult scholastic matters with the greatest of ease. These children represent another unexplained phenomenon. These bright boys and girls come from both superior and ordinary homes. A larger proportion come from the better homes, but in actual numbers the majority hail from humble origins. Thus it is difficult to put one's finger on the true origin of high mental ability, though it may be inherited. However, the gifted children who do come from superior homes usually enjoy a type of environment that is admirably designed to stimulate them to superior achievements.

### *Gifted Children and Social Improvement*

There is another point concerning the gifted, however, that we should emphasize. Leaders in educational psychology have repeatedly suggested that because of his greater possibilities the mentally superior child should not be subjected to the routine, non-creative program designed for more mediocre pupils. It has been advocated that our talented children be given more liberty to work out new ideas and to give expression to their creative abilities.

Such a proposal may seem out of harmony with the strongly emphasized position taken throughout this book that everyone should conform to the commonly accepted standards of our society. The reply is that all, including the gifted, should be expected to conform to the basic codes of honesty, integrity, loyalty, fidelity to promises, sex conduct, and those standards which have proved valuable as a basis for civilized living. The gifted should be trained for leadership. If they are to be effective leaders, they must themselves develop desirable personality

qualities and emotional stability by the process we have described. Intellectual superiority does not guarantee a proportionately better personality. Although very bright children should give much time to study and invention, they, too, must guard against personality disorders.

### *Are Personality Qualities Inherited?*

A group of scientists as well as laymen cling to the idea that personality and character are inherited. To defend this position it is necessary to assume the existence of genes (the germ cell bearers of heredity) that favor wisdom and justice. Once this assumption is made, one can reason that the race must ultimately improve through selective breeding (eugenics). This position assumes that man can have only those personality qualities that are found in his inherited make up. Actually we have abundant evidence that character and personality characteristics are largely determined by the kinds of experience encountered in early years.

Belief in the inheritance of personality traits has, however, largely run its course as an excuse for neglecting psychological processes. Personality and character are determined by the manner and extent to which the life motives of the child find or fail to find legitimate, balanced realization. Man is educable. He has great possibilities of personal improvement and most modern psychologists base their hopes for race improvement on this fact with less emphasis on the biological theory.

There are no doubt those who disagree with these conclusions. For their benefit we should point out that if one accepts a strict interpretation of the theory of predetermination (biological inheritance) of mental ability and conduct tendency, he is likely to feel that delinquency and crime are also inevitable—that is, that criminal tendencies are inborn. This fatalistic view led a few early investigators to believe in a so-called criminal type. It also caused some to take stock in the theory of innate moral ineptitude or the belief that certain people are born with a permanent inability to discern the difference between right and wrong. As students of crime have positively established, these theories are without foundation. Such theories were based on a limited understanding of the complexity of the true factors involved in delinquent behavior. That morally bad behavior is

caused by observable factors in the social environment, such as feelings of insecurity and of hatred for certain people, is so well known as to require little further comment.

If we do not take a fatalistic attitude toward man's improbability or believe in an unchangeable intellectual caste system, our problem is to provide an educational environment designed to develop each individual to the fullest extent our present knowledge and facilities will permit. Our knowledge and facilities will increase and application of psychological principles will grow more effective. We are encouraged in this hope by the overwhelming differences between our own civilization and that of more primitive peoples. It seems reasonable that our more enlightened environment in general, and intelligent teaching and child rearing in particular, must have assisted greatly in bringing about this improvement.

### *Man's Most Difficult Problem*

One of man's most difficult tasks in his effort to construct a more civilized world lies in the necessity of developing a more adequate social outlook. Man's first impulse is to cater to his own comfort and security. He must, of course, for self-protection, develop self-sufficiency and personal independence. However, if he is to prosper and maintain his social integrity, he must also spread his concern to include the welfare of his species. This is the heart of the problem of social stabilization. Before this problem is solved we shall witness industrial strife, social delinquency, political racketeering, and wars of varying magnitude. These and similar phenomena are individual or group expressions of misguided efforts to satisfy the desire for real or imagined personal security which characterizes all normal healthy people. The quest of civilization is for more enlightened means of satisfying man's driving needs in socially constructive ways. We must provide the kind of education and home training that will enable man gradually to replace his more primitive and crudely egoistic methods of seeking satisfaction with those which we recognize as more altruistic and socialized.

As things now stand there is entirely too much simon-pure self-centeredness and not a little unbalanced selflessness. The latter condition is usually due to early and severe parental suppression or to the overshadowing of childhood personality by older peo-



ple Such disorders have been and can be overcome Plenty of people are sufficiently civilized in the sense that they have their physical and egoistic urges under control to avoid reverting to primitive animalistic types of behavior in times of great stress The heroic actions of martyrs, courageous seamen patriotic soldiers pioneer settlers and certain men in public life have testified to this fact If we can develop more widely this attitude of honor and integrity in behalf of the better ethics of civilization we are on our way to individual and social betterment

### *Possibilities of True Social Improvement*

There is room for optimism much more substantial than mere wishful thinking Society has made many marked advances The advances immediately ahead of us are if we utilize even a fraction of the knowledge available as great as we care to make them by our personal and collective attack on the practical problems we face today

Dr William A White the great psychiatrist said in his last book No one has yet dared to suggest a limit to the possibilities of the human mind and it is to these possibilities that we must turn with an abiding hope and a conviction and assurance that they will not fail us\* In order to realize these possibilities to the fullest we must gain a still more intelligent understanding of the basic nature of man and of the driving needs that direct his actions We know that the intellectual and the more basic feeling processes are blended phases of the total personality but we must recognize especially when his security is at stake that the primary motives of man have much to do with giving direction to his intellectual processes

We must further realize that man must endeavor sincerely to strike a balance between catering to his personal needs and those of society No amount of superficial diplomacy in business and in social relations will atone for neglect of genuine obligations in private life Our motives must be basically sound in that they are sincerely directed toward both generous and law abiding living Only in this way can we stem the tides of lawlessness and neuroticism that at present constitute the dilemma of modern civilization Both of these social cankers must be corrected by

\* William A White *Twentieth Century Psychiatry* W W Norton & Company 1936 pp 123 129 177 184

the development of better balanced and more socially inclined personalities.

With better techniques in home, school, and community, man's possibilities of both intellectual and personality development would become much more apparent. Under such conditions we would not need to concern ourselves so much with the problem of social betterment through the breeding of better stocks. A quicker and more accessible way to the solution to that problem lies, according to the admission even of many eminent biologists, in the possibilities of education, more intelligent child rearing, superior community cultures, and stimulating and wholesome environmental conditions. When we really explore the possibilities of environmental control and personal improvement of man himself, we may be surprised at the opportunities for social betterment that lie within our grasp.

#### V. IS THERE A PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL PLANNING?

##### *Good Personalities and the Social Order*

In the teaching profession the question is often asked, "Which is the more important for success, the particular 'method' of teaching used by the instructor, or his personal skill in utilizing psychological principles in teaching situations?" There are many phases of this question that might well be discussed at length, but the general opinion among school men is that within reasonable limits personal skill and management are more important than the exact method used. And so it is in setting up and managing a social order. Many who are working in the field of applied psychology feel that within the general framework of a democracy such as ours, it is far more important that we have strong well-adjusted, self-governing individuals than that we subscribe to some particular brand of planned economic order.

This is not to say that one form of social or political order might not be preferable to another. Neither is it denying the fact that there are enough problems of economic insecurity in our country to warrant economic planning. The point we desire to make is that as fundamental as any social scheme within a democracy is the collective stability and self-dependence of

its citizens Our position throughout this book has been that any nation needs and must develop strong, socially minded, and industrious men and women if it is to maintain a position of power

### *The Basis of National Betterment*

Legislation is important, but it is not the only basis of national betterment We can legislate people into going to church but we cannot make them pious We can give a man a dole or a superficial job to keep himself and his family alive but we cannot thereby make him a more trustworthy and self dependent citizen The qualities that we are arguing for must be self initiated, they must come from within We cannot always succeed in inspiring to such self improvement those who have spent much of their time in drifting Neither can we expect a great deal from those who have been endeavoring to see how much they can get in return for as little effort as possible Our energies should be spent primarily in trying to develop new attitudes and in encouraging new strength of purpose in those who falter

There are so many people who are looking for an easy job with a big pay They are always on the lookout for breaks and windfalls Whenever such persons hear of someone receiving an unexpected legacy they sigh and curse their own bad luck for having to go on using their wits to get along Little do they realize that psychologically it would have been decidedly detrimental to them either to have inherited a million or to have been born rich men's sons, unless they had been able to develop substantial personalities in spite of these lucky breaks It takes goal-striving of a self initiated kind to make a boy or girl into a desirable man or woman This is not the old fashioned doctrine of crucifying the flesh just for the sake of crucifying it It is a basic principle of personality building This is the reason why we would emphasize the planning of a better social-economic order through the development of mature, socially responsible citizens

### *Changing the Social Order Versus Personal Improvement*

Dr Henry Link has aptly described the defensive psychological processes indulged in by those who want a better world with

out doing anything about it themselves. He writes, "One of the most common symptoms of an inferiority complex or of personal failure is the desire to change the social order, usually in one's immediate environment, often in the world at large. . . . We have blamed our misfortunes on the banker, on Wall Street, on the Republicans or the Democrats, on the delinquency of foreign debtors, on the capitalistic system, on the rich, on technology and overproduction — in fact on everything and everybody except ourselves." \* Too often the individual tries to cover up his own shortcomings and avoids making needed changes in his life; instead, he blames the social order. This is an example of psychological drugging.

It is clear that many old people, widows, invalids, orphans, and numerous other unfortunate individuals must have help if they are to live. Against helping them we hold no brief. Certain pension systems and other such forms of collective social security are right and proper. But from a psychological point of view, the general population would be much better off if every person would first do what he can to make himself self-reliant and then, as far as possible, attempt to earn an honest living by uncompensated effort.

### *Balanced Personalities and Social Progress*

Our proposal does not mean propaganda for capitalism. On such a basis captains of industry would be under as much obligation as the most lowly worker to deport themselves fairly and to be concerned with the social welfare. The attitude we encourage means fair dealing in business relations instead of the present all too common "every man for himself" brand of exploitation. We are talking about the same balance of self and social interests that we have been advocating throughout this book. Here we are merely tying it in as a basis for social and economic planning. This ideal is the goal toward which we must strive. It is an axiom of psychology that if man has no goal he does not strive; and if he does not strive he does not make progress.

We should endeavor to build a world in which socialized living and self-realization join hands in promoting a balanced extroverted life for the whole body of society as well as for each individual

\* Henry C. Link, *The Return to Religion*. The Macmillan Company, 1936, p. 131.

member. On this basis alone can we move toward the development of a society that is reasonably free from the blight of neuroticism and in which each individual earns freedom and self-expression within the framework of the whole social structure

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# AUTHOR INDEX

## A, B

Adler, A , 18, 19, 20, 204  
 Bagley, W. C., 224, 231  
 Bassett, C., 96  
 Benjamin, L P , 170  
 Bennett, M E , 151  
 Baruch, D W , 23, 70  
 Bode, B H , 259  
 Bogardus, E S , 23, 231  
 Brande, D , 151  
 Briggs, T H , 29, 48  
 Brockman, M , 175  
 Bryce, J , 227  
 Bullock, A E., 23  
 Burkhart, R A , 70  
 Burns, R , 60

## C

Cabot, R C , 231  
 Carrel, A , 220, 259  
 Cason, H , 159  
 Casselberry, W S , 134  
 Chapman, J C., 231  
 Clark, W W , 97, 141  
 Counts, G S , 31, 48, 231  
 Crane, G W , 96, 161, 175

## D

Dickerson R E , 70  
 Dunlap, K , 201, 202, 208

## E

Eastburn, L. A , 48  
 Erickson, E J , 23, 151

## F

Falk, C. J , 48  
 Fenton N , 121  
 Fink, D H , 209  
 Fishbein, M , 208  
 Fisher, V E , 9, 23, 121, 222, 239,  
 259  
 Fosdick, H E , 138, 231  
 Freud, S , 17, 18, 19, 20, 204

## G

Gilkey, J G , 231

## H

Haddock, L., 151  
 Hall, G S , 29

## J

Jacobson, E , 199, 200, 208  
 James, W , 215, 221  
 Johnson, W B , 63  
 Jung, C G , 19, 20

## K

Katz, B , 97  
 Kelley, V H , 48  
 Klem, D B , 121

## L

Laird, D A , 155, 167, 169, 175  
 Lewis, R H , 23, 231  
 Link H C , 3, 48, 104, 134, 135,  
 144, 257, 258, 259  
 Lippmann, W , 48, 229, 231, 259  
 Lumley F E , 259

## M

Mackenzie G N , 175  
 Mallory R K , 151  
 Mason E C , 48  
 McClean M , 175  
 McConnell T R , 23, 97  
 McKinney, F , 70, 231  
 McLean, D , 53, 54, 70, 151  
 Morgan J J B , 70, 121, 140, 151,  
 175, 209  
 Mumford, L. P , 259

## O

Odegard, P H , 48

## P

Popenoe, P , 52, 67  
 Powers, F F , 23, 48, 97

## R

Richmond, W. V., 55, 56, 70  
 Rivlin, H. N., 121  
 Rousseau, J. J., 7, 150  
 Ruch, F. L., 130, 158, 175  
 Rusk, R. R., 215

## S

Sayles, M., 203  
 Shaffer, L. F., 228  
 Shellow, S. M., 151  
 Sherman, M., 23, 97  
 Skinner, C. L., 97  
 Swift, A. L., 231

## T

Terman, L. M., 63, 249, 259  
 Thorndike, L. L., 39, 213  
 Thorpe, L. P., 69, 97, 121, 141, 209  
 Thurstone, L. L., 35  
 Tiegs, E. W., 97, 141, 209  
 Travis, L. E., 23, 70

## U, V

Uhl, W. L., 48  
 Vaughn, W. F., 70  
 Voelker, P. F., 151

## W

Watson, J. B., 197  
 Weatherhead, L., 209  
 Webb, E. T., 96, 140, 151, 160, 175  
 Wells, L., 81  
 Wheatley, W., 151  
 White, W., 85, 97, 175, 186  
 White, W. A., 223, 255, 259  
 Wiltse, A. F., 95  
 Witte, P. A., 197  
 Woodward, E., 23  
 Wright, M., 23

## Y, Z

Young, P. T., 23  
 ZuTavern, A. B., 23, 151

# SUBJECT INDEX

## A

- Adjustment to life
  - role of intelligence in 28 29
  - by psychological drugs 78-79
  - reactions to failure 79 80
  - popular semi-religious systems of 92-93
  - self pampering tendency 94-95 245
  - importance of self reliance 94-95
  - philosophy and 230 231
- Agoraphobia 107
- Ambiverts 116
- Anxiety neurosis 109
- Attitudes
  - action determined by 27
  - importance of 29-30
  - origin of 36 37
  - development of 37
  - development of undesirable 37 38
  - as drives to action 39 40
  - and home environment 40 41
  - psychology of 239
  - man's most difficult problem 254 255

## B

- Balance of basic motives 11
  - causes of nervous disorders 12
  - function of nervous symptoms 12
  - importance of 13 14 46 47
  - man's proclivity for self interest, 14 15
- Basic needs or motives of man see fundamental needs

## Behavior

- reason as a guide to 27 28
- self imposed rules of 149

## C

### Children

- over indulgence of 107-108
- Intelligent democracy and rearing of 246-247
- better preparation for rearing of 247

- guidance clinics for parents on rearing of 247 248
- national interest in psychology of 248 249
- social improvement and gifted 252 253

## D

- Defense mechanisms
  - as face savers 78-80
  - rationalization 80 82
  - projection 82
  - renunciation 82
  - compensation 83-84
  - psychological posing 85 86
  - ego inflation 86-87
  - legitimate use of 87-88
  - psychologist's attitude toward 88 89

## E

### Emotions

- causes of immaturity of 52
- influence of early sets on 52-53
- observed infantilisms 53
- imbalance of and success 55 56
- how to attain maturity of 56-57
- health and 64-65
- objectivity and 65
- meeting situations involving 65-66
- and sex drive 66-67
- and inferiority complexes, 67-68
- and superiority complexes 68
- and contributions to adult life 69
- introversion and, 114 115

### Escape mechanisms, see defense mechanisms

### Extroversion

- contrasted with introversion 101 102
- possible disadvantages of 103
- comparative value of 104
- advantages of moderate 121
- illustrations of building 141 142
- development of 142-143



## F

- Fundamental needs or drives, 8  
 organic need, 9  
 ego-recognition, 9  
 social need, 9 10  
 balance of, 10  
 importance of satisfying, 10, 126  
 imbalance of, 14 17  
 as stress producers, 74

## H

- Human nature  
 nature of, 6  
 pre-scientific notions of, 6-7  
 fallacies in views on, 7  
 concept of fundamental needs, 8  
 why it appears evil, 15 16  
 wholesale improvement of, 172 173  
 and a finer society, 174 175  
*Hysteria*, 109

## I

- Infantilisms  
 examples of, 53  
 and marriage, 57  
 and development, 57 58  
 and homosexuality, 58  
 Introversion  
 contrasted with extroversion, 101 102  
 fallacies in the type idea, 102  
 characteristics of, 103  
 emotional vs social 103 104  
 various forms of 103 104  
 comparative stability of, 104  
 development of, 104 105  
 and nervous disorders 108 109  
 causes of 110  
 social mal-adjustment of 111 113  
 and emotional immaturity, 114 115  
 psychological treatment of, 116 118  
 how to avoid, 118 119

## M

- Marriage  
 romantic love and, 62-63  
 sexual relations and, 62-63  
 basis of a successful, 63-64  
 ways to the stabilization of, 249-250  
 Mental status, influence of opportunity on 251 252

- Moral maturity  
 stages of, 34 35  
 nature of, 35 36  
 religion and, 42 43  
 social influences and, 42 43

## Morals

- origin of codes of, 31 32  
 importance of, 33 34  
 and mental discipline, 42  
 in a changing world, 43 44

## N

- Nervous disorders, 108 109  
 agoraphobia, 106-107  
 malingering, 109  
 neurasthenia, 109  
 psychasthenia, 109  
 phobias, 109  
 hysteria, 109  
 neurosis, 110  
 as causes of unhappiness, 118  
 psychological knowledge of, 182 183  
 how contracted, 185 187  
 what can psychologists do about, 188 190  
 probable real causes of, 238  
 Neurosis  
 characteristics of, 108 110, 185, 187  
 why the afflicted must act not read, 191  
 dangers of excessive self-examination, 191 192  
 apparent increase of, 237

## O

- Organic needs as drives, 9

## P

- Personality  
 as mystic inner self," 3  
 as social effectiveness 3  
 ambiguity of concept of, 3 4  
 nature of traits, 3 4  
 Personality concept of  
 social stimulus view of, 3 4  
 as a pattern of traits 4 5  
 relation of intelligence to, 5-6  
 psychoanalytic theory of 17 19  
 as an energy system, 73  
 qualities of a good 130-135

Race and personality (*Continued*)

conflicting views on stability, 237  
238

developments detrimental to, 239  
individualistic attitude of the family,  
240

evasion of obligations, 241 242  
failure to rear children psycholog-  
ically, 242 243

emancipation from moral restraints,  
243 244

possibilities of true improvement,  
255 256

## Religion and personality

popular semi religious systems, 89

shortcomings of cults, 90

oriental systems and self-suggestion,  
90-91

morals and ethics vs. supernatural,  
221

scientific views of, 221 223

practical values of, 223 224 225  
226

in the adjustment of people, 224  
225

what it may do for personality,  
226-228

decline in supernaturalism, 241

## S

## Self-suggestion 91

## Sex

behavior, 58 59

unbiased viewpoint of 59-60

problems of girls 61-62

sublimation of, 66-67

## Social order

good personalities and, 256-257

basis of national betterment, 257

personal improvement vs changing  
the, 257 258

## Social skills

how to develop, 128

of popular youth, 135 136

development of active, 139

standards for development of 144  
145

importance of home training 156  
157

Stresses of personality, *see* personality  
disturbances

Success, real vs economic, 56-57

## T

## Traits

nature of, 3 4

personality as a pattern of, 4 5

modern view of development of,  
38 39

of personality, desirable 132

description of personality, 132 133

of personality in youth 134 135

anti-social 155 156

as evidence for basis of popularity  
166-169

that men like in women, 170

## U

Unconditioning implications for per-  
sonality, 197 199